

Antoni Ziemba

The Agency of Art Objects in Northern Europe, 1380–1520



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PETER LANG
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I. INTRODUCTION

This book is the outcome of my research on the Burgundian and Netherlandish art of the fifteenth century. Hitherto, I have published my studies in Polish in three volumes entitled: *The Art of the Burgundy and the Netherlands 1380–1500*.¹ The present book is an expanded and revised version of selected chapters from the third volume of this trilogy, *The Community of Things: The Netherlandish and Northern European Art 1380–1520*, which was published in 2015.

I investigate the art as a set of man-made objects, which can take control over humans. They are *active*, because they dictate the cognitive perspective, the modes of visual perception and experience of space and scale. These objects can also stimulate certain behaviours. They can force specific movements, gestures, actions, and manipulations, animating a thing meant to activate the beholder's own body. The definitions of space and scale, animation, mobility and manipulation are vital modes for the agency of works of art in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

In a way, my approach is informed by the latest shift in both art historical and general historical studies. To the present day, such methodology remains the final stage in the line of different concepts about history of art, from the history of spirituality and mentality, iconology, through semiology, structuralism, the Marxist social history of art, hermeneutics, phenomenology, post-modern theories of post-structuralism and gender studies, to the recent posthumanist thought. This last theoretical strand – still *in statu nascendi* – seems a promising point of departure for the enquiry into the works of art as a history of objects, of things with active power, conditioning people and their social lives.

Historical studies offer various interpretations of works of art, but they always consider them as *works of art*, never as things. They frame these objects as expressions of human genius, artistry, knowledge and skill.

1 A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów 1380–1500* [The Art of Burgundy and the Netherlands 1380–1500], vol. I: *Sztuka dworu burgundzkiego oraz miast niderlandzkich 1380–1500* [The Art of the Court of Burgundy and the Cities of the Netherlands 1380–1500], Warsaw 2008; vol. II: *Niderlandzkie malarstwo tablicowe 1430–1500* [Netherlandish Panel Painting 1430–1500], Warsaw 2011; vol. III: *Wspólnota rzeczy. Sztuka niderlandzka i północnoeuropejska 1380–1520* [The Community of Things: The Netherlandish and Northern European Art 1380–1520], Warsaw 2015. For the present book, I have used chapters I and III.4–III.7 from the last mentioned volume.

Historians, apart from art historians, often use artworks as simple *illustrations* of various processes and political or social events. Thus, they tend to think about these objects as *symptoms*, *manifestations*, *signs*, or *reflections* of different situations, events and ideas. This approach denies the existence of the work of art in its own right and promotes its indexical role as a marker of certain events. Art historians are infuriated when historians use a work of art as a simple illustration in a textbook. But is their fury justified? The discipline of history of art has promoted art as a manifestation of certain periods: historic narratives distinctive from the history of style or artistic ideas. Are artworks merely reflections of the external historic processes, or are they active objects operating through time? Can they be seen as participants in the game between people and their institutions? Are they formative agents – operating irrespectively of the human will – shaping human actions, mentality, customs, living conditions? Is it history that produces art, or is it art that generates history and life?

Let us consider various objects, examples of *things*, which functioned in the visual culture of the Late Middle Ages.

I.1. From *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte* to a posthumanist theory of the agency of things

The celebrated work by the Netherlandish painter, Hans Memling, the *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove* [fig. 1] can be interpreted in numerous ways according to the different methodologies introduced by the history of art.



Fig. 1: Hans Memling, *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove*, 1487, Bruges, Groeningemuseum

At the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, Max Dvořák and Aby Warburg developed a theory of history of art as a universal history of ideas (*Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte*), in which works of art were symptoms of a “great artistic stream of the spiritual development” (Dvořák). In this perspective, Memling’s diptych becomes an expression of specific socio-religious circumstances and a philosophical and intellectual formation: for Dvořák it was an example of nominalism – apart from the realism one of the main philosophical and theological views of the Late Middle Ages. Traditional realists, including scholastics such as Thomas Aquinas, considered the *ideas* of things (the universals) as actually existing; the things available to our senses were merely a material realisation of the divine ideas and the tenets of faith. In turn, the nominalists set intellectual cognition far apart from faith (the famous “Occam’s razor”), only specific things (*res*) were tangible, real entities, whilst the universals were for them only names of these things – *nomina*, merely conventions invented by the human mind. They promoted the empirical cognition and analysis of phenomena – of these *res*. According to Dvořák, the descriptive naturalism of the Netherlandish painting was a late reflection of the nominalist thought, whilst the earlier Gothic idealism was linked to the philosophical realism.

In another great theory of history of art, the iconology of Erwin Panofsky, the work of art was a symptom of the historic cultural situation, for instance of the late medieval patrician culture and its new type of private devotion (*devotio moderna*), which is manifested through a code of hidden symbols. Objects, gestures and situations, shown as seemingly ordinary, were to convey a deeper religious meaning: theological, liturgical, sacramental. In the case of the said diptych, it referred to the piety of the young man depicted, and addressed the purity of his soul and hope of salvation. The painting *does not represent*, it *cultivates theology* – argued Panofsky. The *Nieuwenhove Diptych* is a symbolic profession of faith in the Incarnation, the virginal motherhood of Mary: her purity, as well as faith in the power of avid, private prayer, which purifies the soul of the young donor. This interpretation is based on the deciphering of various hidden symbols, which formulate an integral message: the unblemished mirror (*speculum sine macula* from the Canticles), the window as the symbol of the soul, the book – a symbol of the Gospels and the mystery of the Salvation of mankind, the fruit – a symbol of the lost spiritual innocence enjoyed in Paradise (*gaudium paradisi*) [fig. 2]. The art historian deciphers this hidden symbolism, and their reconstruction provides a deeper understanding of the civilization. This includes its mentality, religious faith, beliefs and the worldview of people from a specific period, milieu, and of a certain social status.

It is also possible to interpret paintings according to the category of social history of art – a materialist concept, most frequently the Neo-Marxist theory, which made use of the renewal of classical Marxism by Louis Althusser and

his numerous followers, including Pierre Bourdieu. The figures are depicted in a chamber, which opens to the suburban landscape through the windows. Nieuwenhove sojourns in his suburban residence. The mirror on the wall clarifies the scene [fig. 3]: we see the Virgin and Child, frontally through the window, and Nieuwenhove kneels directly at the Virgin's side, in the same chamber, which annihilates the division into the wings of the diptych. It is not so much a devotional space, but a space that demonstrates the social status of the depicted. We see Maarten van Nieuwenhove, a young, twenty-three-year-old (as inscribed on the frame) patrician from Bruges, who awaits a great future, resulting from the position of his family, who for centuries had held the highest offices in Bruges (indeed he became a city counsellor, the captain of the town militia, and finally the mayor of Bruges). The stained-glass windows [fig. 4] show the saintly knights: George, Martin (the patron saint of the sitter) and St. Christopher, the patron saint of merchants, also considered to be a knight. Behind the Virgin there is a prominent coat-of-arms of the van Nieuwenhove family, fashioned after knightly models, with the motto *Il ya cause* (Nothing without the reason) and the emblems of the hand of God sprinkling the garden with water, the "new garden," *het nieuwe hof*, linking to the family name. The aim of the work is to demonstrate the donor's high status and aspirations to the knighthood – a testimony to the social change, conditioned by the economic wealth of the patricians, that was taking place in the fifteenth century.

The works of art, such as the Memling's diptych, were interpreted in a yet different way by semioticians and structuralists of the second half of the twentieth century, and proponents of the post-structuralism, deconstructivism, intertextuality, narrativism, new historicism, post-sacrality, alter-globalism, and all postmodernists, who appeared after the Neo-Marxist revolt in 1968 in France, and spread across America, England and Germany. Their ideas were employed by art historians such as Svetlana Alpers, Mieke Bal, Keith Moxey and many others. It was the time of the so-called linguistic turn – or semiotic – which substituted the great theories with the linguistic message produced by a single work of art, created again and again, by new beholders in various periods. Thus, the work of art is free of the constraints of intentions of the historic author-maker. In such a way, the contemporary viewer interprets the diptych through his/her own experience and knowledge, for instance considering the memory of a trip to Bruges or an image on a kitchen apron, which is present in her/his desacralized daily life [fig. 5]. This approach is promoted by the theory of intertextuality, which welcomes interpretations of works of art through other cultural texts – contemporary with the work, preceding its production, and above all subsequent to it chronologically: paintings, images, representations, for which the work forms a screen for personal projections of the beholder [fig. 6]. The

post-structuralist will search for the viewer inscribed in the painting; he/she will encourage the beholder to find his/her place in the imagined space, to ask oneself various questions. Where is the mirror? Where did the painter and the viewer stand? Who looks at what? Who is actually reflected in the mirror? Who sees what? [fig. 7]. The post-structuralist encourages a fresh re-enactment of the internal structure of the painting, which depends on the viewer who has just encountered it. This interest is shared between the post-structuralism and the anthropology of images as theorized by Hans Belting.

Postmodernism was at times linked with gender theory of history of art – feminist, homosexual and queer – though it is an independent methodological strand, based on Neo-Marxist materialism and empiricism. For instance, in 2005 Andrea Pearson located in the diptych the concepts of growing up and adulthood of men in the fifteenth-century Netherlandish society. She considered the painting to be an expression of fears of homosexuality and a lecture on the physicality of young men and boys, facing their sexuality, physiology, and the torment of nocturnal emissions, confronted here with the purity of Christ and the Virgin. They are in a way pardoned through the Incarnation of God in Christ, whose human nature included also the gender and (unexplored, but present) sexuality (hence the motif of the so-called showing of Christ's genitalia – *ostentatio genitalium*) [fig. 8]. According to the postmodern theory Memling's diptych presents a potential identity model for contemporary young men, whether of the macho type or more feminine. We can even call this a subversive model for 'metrosexual' hipsters or emo boys [fig. 9]. Perhaps, though Maarten's clothes have little to do with hipsters' fashion, or 'emo-style,' his hairstyle on the other hand, is perhaps closer...

Finally, the diptych could be also interpreted according to the phenomenological-hermeneutics, post-Heidegger and post-Gadamer, developed by fashionable thinkers such as Michael Brötje or Georges Didi-Huberman. This methodology seeks to understand the sacred and the spiritual emotions hidden in the painting, which can be observed, as if marginally, through the form: through what is relegated into the background, to the margins, to the borders. What is the visual *fissure*, is it literally present or just metaphorically alluded to? – for instance a space behind the half-closed window shutter, which introduces the external world, the realm of *negotium* (affairs), secular life allowed into a space filled with prayer and the presence of the holy figures [fig. 10].

In these various traditional modes of interpretation, the starting point is always the *representation* – the embodiment of the human form. All aforementioned interpretative methods remain deeply anthropocentric. Human beings, as makers and models for the representation, are active subjects in the communication between the image and the viewer. The object itself remains merely a screen onto which an artist or a beholder projects his or

her vision. The man is in the centre: artist, patron, sitter, as well as contemporary viewers and subsequent beholders. At the same time, all we have is the object-thing. People, once active agents, are dead, and the contemporary viewer becomes a phantom, coming and going, elusive, momentary and fleeting. Should we perhaps look at the image as a thing with a life of its own, with its own agency and the power to act? The object could be an agent affecting human behaviour, relationships, and networks of mutual relations. Inevitably, the social fabric consists of humans and the non-humans that assist and condition men. These include animals, the biosphere, objects, mechanisms and devices; biochemical and biophysical components of life, and finally mechanical prostheses and artificial extensions of human bodies, from medieval glasses and lenses to cybernetic implants; lastly (as well) artefacts functioning in the cyber-network. This perspective on the history of mankind is assumed by the latest field in historical studies, namely posthumanism. In the West, it is advocated by Bruno Latour.²

Following Latour, let us consider: the role of a fifteenth-century diptych, operating as a thing. Its construction and the intended method of handling are telling. Diptychs were lifted and examined closely. They required manual handling to open and close them. *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove* includes the portrait of the donor within a lavish frame, more luxurious than the frame of the second wing – which means that he was to be a “jar top” covering the image of the Virgin and Child, revealed only after the wing was open. [fig. 11] Only the third view, when the diptych was fully open, showed the portrait of Maarten. The form of the object directed the order of opening. The structure imposed a set sequence of views, prayers, and the presentation of the owner [fig. 12].

2 B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*, Oxford 2005 and his “The powers of association,” in: *Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge*, ed. J. Law, London–Boston 1986; *We Have Never Been Modern*, London–Cambridge 1993; – *Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, London–Cambridge (Mass.) 1999; – *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, London–Cambridge (Mass.) 2004; M. Akrich, B. Latour, “A Summary of a Convenient Vocabulary for the Semiotics of Human and Non-human Assemblies,” in: *Shaping Technology-Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*, eds. W. Bijker, J. Law, Cambridge (Mass.) 1992; B. Latour, P. Lemmonier, *De la préhistoire aux missiles balistiques – l’intelligence sociale des techniques*, Paris 1994; M. Serres, B. Latour, *Conversation on Science, Culture and Nature*, Ann Arbor 1995. Moreover: *Actor Network Theory and After*, eds. J. Law, J. Hassard, Oxford 1999.



Fig. 2: The *Nieuwenhove Diptych*, with the scheme of symbolic motifs highlighted



Fig. 3: The *Nieuwenhove Diptych*, detail showing the mirror



Fig. 4: The *Nieuwenhove Diptych*, details showing the stained glass



Fig. 5: The *Nieuwenhove Diptych*, as a tourist souvenir reproduced on a T-shirt and a kitchen apron



Fig. 6: One-florin postcard with the stamp of the Memling Exhibition organised under the patronage of King Leopold III in Bruges in 1939; a film frame from *Elmer Gantry* by Richard Brooks (1960)

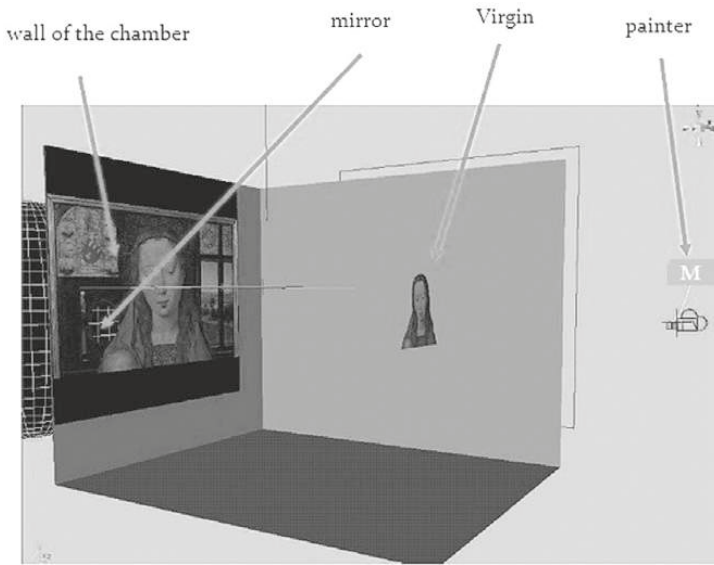


Fig. 7: Scheme of *The Nieuwenhove Diptych*'s spatial structure



Fig. 8: *The Nieuwenhove Diptych*, detail showing Christ's body as a motif of *ostentatio genitalium*



Fig. 9: *The Nieuwenhove Diptych*, the image of the donor

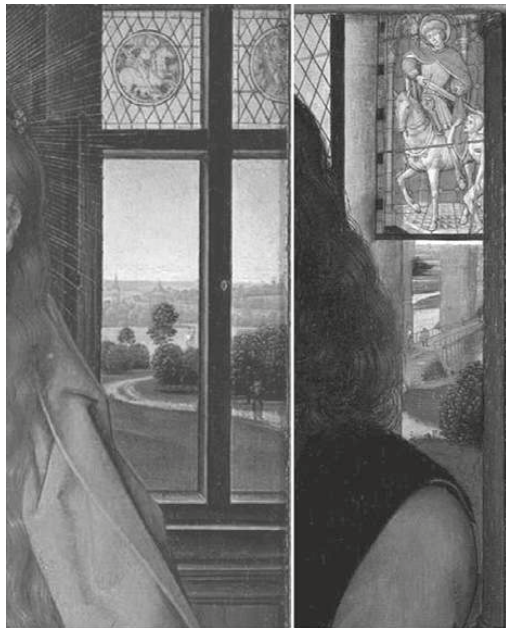


Fig. 10: *The Nieuwenhove Diptych*, details showing landscape views

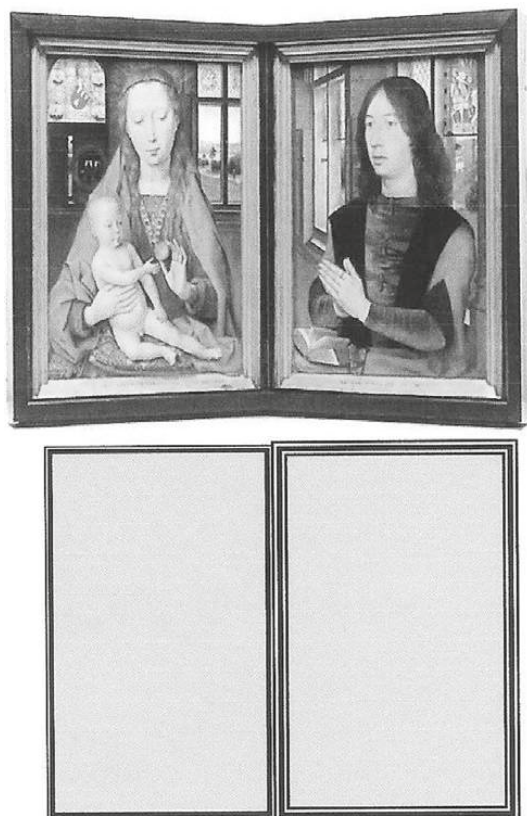


Fig. 11: *The Nieuwenhove Diptych*, open, and the scheme of reverses



Fig. 12: *The Nieuwenhove Diptych*, scheme of opening order

Used as domestic altarpieces, diptychs could be placed on tables or other pieces of furniture, open at a specific angle, which would prevent them from collapsing. They had to be viewed with wings set diagonally to the central panel, with scenes viewed at a specific angle. At times diptychs were treated as books, kept in cabinets or inside chests, sometimes in special cases, from which they were removed, unfolded, looked at and folded back again. Sometimes they would be hung on a wall on a chain; this way of displaying the diptych permitted them to be closed or opened easily, revealing a chosen side of any wing. This positioning enabled the gaze of the donor to meet that of the holy figures – the Virgin or Christ – thus ensuring that the figures communicate with each other, a crucial aspect that would have been lost with wings fully open.

History of art begins to employ the posthumanist methodology, when it turns to the study of mobile objects, which engage various senses and shape human surroundings.³ Undoubtedly, this strategy is the future of the discipline, which

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- 3 S.C.M. Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society at the Chartreuse de Champmol*, Aldershot 2008 (reprinted Abingdon–New York 2016); *Push Me, Pull You*, vol. I: *Imaginative and Emotional Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, vol. II: *Physical and Spatial Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, ed. S. Blick, L.D. Gelfand, Leiden–Boston 2011; D.S. Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe*, Farnham 2010; *Meaning in Motion: The Semantics of Movement in Medieval Art*, ed. by N. Zchomelidse, G. Freni, Princeton 2011; *Mobile Eyes. Peripatetisches Sehen in den Bildkulturen der Vormoderne*, ed. D. Ganz, Paderborn 2013 (see e.g.: J.E. Jung, *The kinetics of gothic sculpture: movement and apprehension in the South transept of Strasbourg cathedral and the Chartreuse de Champmol in Dijon*, pp. 133–173; R. Krischel, *Handelnde Bilder. Zur Kinetik des Klappbildes in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, pp. 243–270). *Movement – Bewegung: über die dynamischen Potenziale der Kunst* ed. by A. Beyer, G. Cassegrain, Berlin 2015; M. Rimmele, “Transparenzen, variable Konstellationen, gefaltete Welten. Systematisierende Überlegungen zur medien-spezifischen Gestaltung von dreiteiligen Klappbildern,” in: *Klappereffekte. Faltbare Bildträger in der Vormoderne*, ed. by D. Ganz, M. Rimmele, Berlin 2016, pp. 13–54; *The Agency of Things in Medieval and Early Modern Art: Materials, Power and Manipulation*, ed. by G. Jurkowlanec, I. Matyjaszkiewicz, Z. Sarnecka, New York–London 2018; *The Notion of Liminality and the Medieval Sacred Space*, ed. by I. Foletti, K. Doležalová, Turnhout 2019 (see especially: J. Klípa, E. Poláčková, *Tabulae cum portis, vela, cortinae and sudaria: Remarks on the Liminal Zones in the Liturgical and Para-Liturgical Contexts in the Late Middle Ages*, pp. 112–133); *The Reception of the Printed Image in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: Multiplied and Modified*, ed. by G. Jurkowlanec and M. Hermann, Routledge: Abingdon–New York, forthcoming (2021). Without references to the Posthumanist theory, Susie Nash analysed the mobility and functional agency of works of late medieval art in her monograph from 2008. See: S.

from its origins deals with objects-things. How can this non-anthropocentric, non-humanist method be employed in art historical studies? It is possible only through approaching artistic objects, not as artworks but as objects, things created by people, but gaining their own entity, their own power and agency in shaping humans and the common environment. It is not my aim to simply apply the general posthumanist theory to surviving examples of late medieval art. It is not the purpose of this book. This theory provides the creative stimulus for the present study and is not used as a methodological background for interpretations of the artworks created in the past.

Fifteenth-century works of art often invited manual handling: the opening of books, flipping through their pages, searching for a prayer or a specific illumination [fig. 13]; precious metalwork was placed inside and taken out of chests or boxes for display [fig. 14]. Tapestries were folded and unfolded, to be hung on the walls on special occasions, not necessarily flatly [fig. 15]. Large, medium and small winged altarpieces were constantly open and closed [fig. 16]. Figures of Christ, at times with moveable parts, participated in the Easter liturgy [figs. 17–18]. Miniatures were cut out from illuminated manuscripts and stuck on walls; individual prints were widely disseminated [figs. 19–20]. The world of artefacts that constitutes the visual culture of the Late Middle Ages was also haptic, appealing to the sense of touch. People interacted physically with artworks through handling them, manipulating them, holding them in their hands, and at times even fondling, caressing or kissing them. A common ritual involved touching and kissing relics; through the physical contact blessing for the faithful was imparted [fig. 21]. The Easter ritual of *Depositio Crucis* included a range of physical manipulations from the moment when the figure of Christ was removed from the cross, carried in a procession and finally placed inside a tomb. The realism of these operations, based on touch, was enhanced by the softness of Christ's body and His skin, evoked through lifelike polychromy or through surfaces covered in parchment and animal skin [figs. 22–23]. The naked figurines of the Christ Child were caressed, kissed, bathed by nuns and later dressed in handmade robes, according to a specific female practice that developed in nunneries [figs. 24–25]. Prayer nuts were meant to be held and turned in hands. The pages of illuminated manuscripts and books were flipped. Small diptychs and triptychs, as well as panel paintings and tondi, were held in hands, to be looked

Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art* (Oxford History of Art), Oxford 2008. For a study on social functions of artefacts see the conference book *Prayer Nuts, Private Devotion and Early Modern Art Collecting*, ed. by E. Wetter and F. Scholten, with contributions by L. Ellis, R. Falkenburg, E.M. Kavalier, I. Reesing, F. Scholten, J.C. Smith, A. Suda, I. M. Veldman, E. Wetter, *Riggisberger Berichte* 22, Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg 2017.

at and examined, or at times they were placed on a table or shelf or hung on a wall. Prints and playing cards were constantly rearranged, and displayed in series or packs [fig. 26]. During pilgrimages they were carried as part of a pilgrim's personal belongings, and were later kept at their homes, to be touched as plaquettes-talismans [fig. 27].⁴

All the actions described above confirm that fifteenth-century art was an array of moveable, active things that were manually operated but which also had the ability to manipulate their beholders.

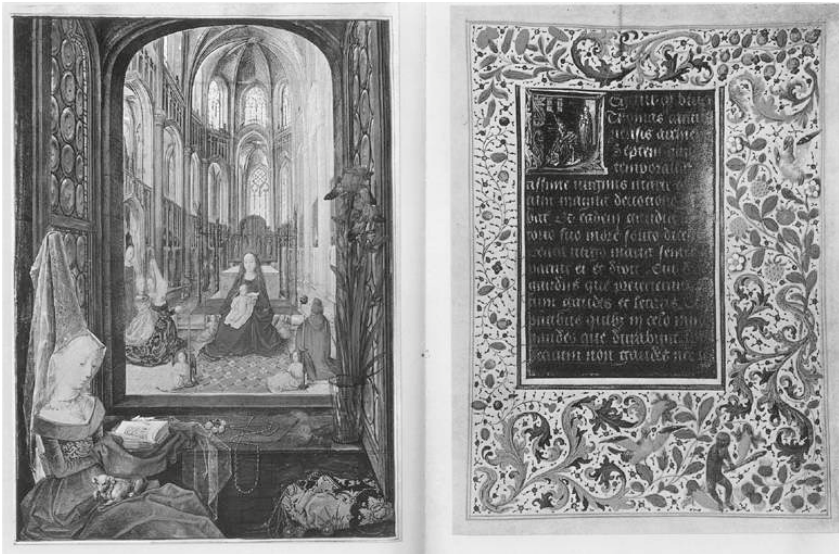


Fig. 13: The Master of Mary of Burgundy, *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, 1477, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857, fol. 14v–15r

4 B. Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges*, London 1998.



Fig. 14: Parisian goldsmith, *The Little Golden Horse (Goldenes Rössl)*, 1403/1404, Altötting Abbey



Fig. 15: Tapestries from the series of *The Life of the Virgin* hanging in the choir of the collegiate church of Notre-Dame in Beaune, designed by Pierre Spicre, commissioned by Jean Rolin in 1474, and executed c. 1500



Fig. 16: Veit Stoss, *Altarpiece of St. Mary* in Cracow – in the course of opening

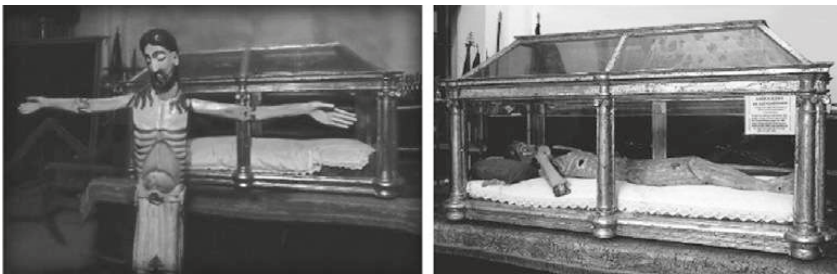


Fig. 17: *Cristo de los Gascones* in the church of San Justo in Segovia, 12th century – a figure with moveable arms and legs, which could be dismantled from the cross and placed in the Holy Sepulchre for the Easter triduum

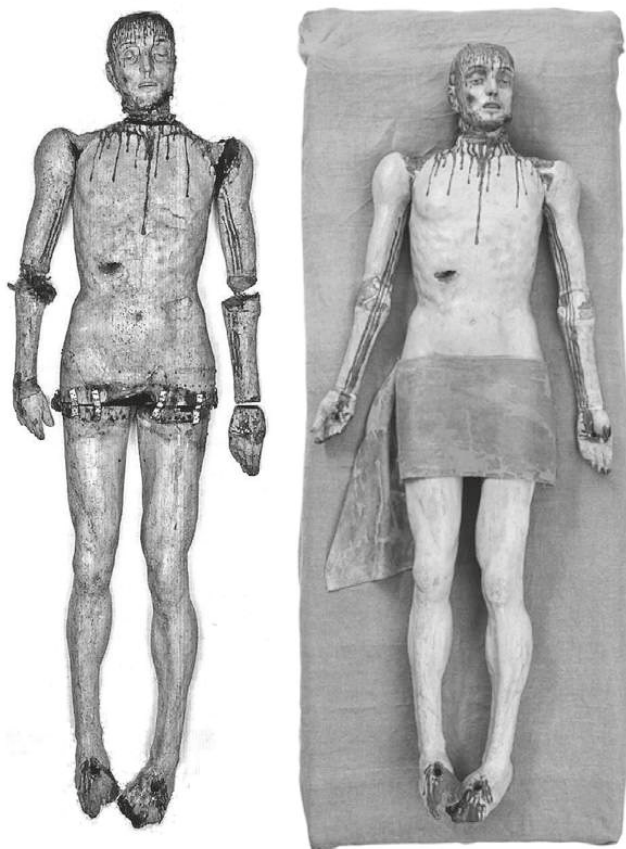


Fig. 18: *Christ of Döbeln*, the so-called *Mirakelmann* of the church of Sankt Nikolai, Döbeln: a figure with moveable arms and legs, used in the Easter ritual of *Depositio Crucis* (before and after conservation)



Fig. 19: Petrus Christus, *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1450, London, The National Gallery – with a folio of a prayer book or a coloured woodcut, mounted on the wall



Fig. 20: German master from ca. 1420, *St Dorothy*, woodcut, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek



Fig. 21: Kissing the reliquary of the Holy Crown in the Sainte-Chapelle, Paris – modern photo



Fig. 22: *Christ of Döbeln*, the so-called *Mirakelmann* of the church of Sankt Nikolai, Döbeln – a figure with moveable arms and legs, covered with a parchment imitation of skin and visible remains of human hair on the scalp and beard areas



Fig. 23: German artist, figure Christ removed from the crucifix (the so-called *Cristo de las Claras*), convent of Santa Clara, Palencia – a figure with moveable limbs, nails made from ox horn, partially covered with (lamb?) skin, end of the 14th or beginning of the 15th century



Fig. 24: Niklaus Gerhaert van Leyden, *Christ Child with Grapes*, c. 1465, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 25: Workshop of Michel Erhart in Ulm, *Christ Child with an Apple*, ca. 1470–1480, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection (2012.449)



Fig. 26: German painter (Upper Rhine), Playing cards from Ambras (*Ambraser Hofjagdspiel*), 1440–1445, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

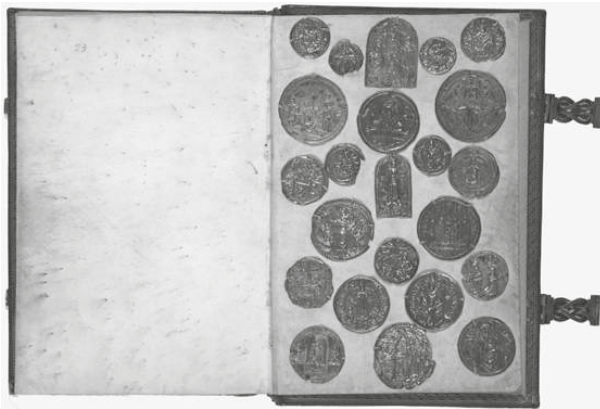


Fig. 27: Book of Hours with sewn pilgrims' badges, Bruges, c. 1440–1460, The Hague, Koninklijk Bibliotheek, 77 L 60

I.2. The illusion of the objectivity of the work of art

Illusion always demonstrates the objectivity of an artwork, and the materiality of the artist's product. Fifteenth-century works of art often define themselves as things. They constitute and display their status as objects, skillfully crafted through an artistic technique. Through the illusion of specific materials, they mimic, and become technical things, obtained through the shaping of the matter. They pretend to be something else. A painted polypptych imitates a stone wall with niches filled with sculpted figures (*The Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck, *The Throne of Grace* by the Master of Flémalle and many others) [figs. 28–29]. Triptychs formed of three painted panels by Rogier van der Weyden (*The Miraflores Altarpiece* and *The Altarpiece of St. John*), Dirk Bouts or Hans Memling imitate in reduced format a stone façade of a three-bayed building with elaborate architectural details and rich sculptural decoration [figs. 30–33]. The painted and carved *Reliquary of St. Ursula* by Memling [fig. 34] tricks the viewer into believing that it is an arcaded loggia, which opens to a vast landscape and various narratives. Rogier van der Weyden's *The Descent from the Cross* in the Prado – a painted panel – imitates the predella of a carved altarpiece [fig. 35]. Monochromatic, unpolychromed wooden statues of various Netherlandish and German retables (Tilman Riemenschneider and others) at times imitate bronze or stone figures [figs. 36–37]. At the same time, lavishly gilded retables pretend to be large scale goldsmiths' works (altarpieces by Jacques de Baerze, triptychs from Champmol Charterhouse) [figs. 38–40]. Numerous book illuminations painted *en grisaille* suggest that they are carved elements or elaborate drawings [figs. 41–42]. Manuscript folia unfold like diptychs, whilst small diptychs open in the same way as codices [figs. 43–44]. Miniatures imitate paintings [fig. 45]. Prints at times pretend to be sculptures, paintings, or fragments of architecture, such as stone portals [figs. 46–47]. When a fly, a dragonfly or a butterfly rests on the folio of an illuminated manuscript covered with flowers and foliage, or when a snail or a fly moves along the bordure, we grasp fully and clearly that we do not handle a fragment of a meadow or a garden but an artificial object, produced from parchment or paper [figs. 48–51].

Precisely because these objects pretend to be something materially different, they force the viewer to notice their objectivity, their status of being a material thing – a material painting, figure, sculpture, book, sheet of paper or parchment. Through imitating a foreign matter, they define their own materiality, the condition of being a specific thing. Through insisting on this status, they separate the representation from its reality. This play with the viewer reveals the existence of these objects as substantial and sensory things.

The illusion, which defines the image as both a material thing and an artistic creation, justifies their existence. In the fifteenth century, painterly

illusion carried a theological message. Images – painted, carved, printed or drawn – had to manifest their materiality to disassociate themselves from representation, understood as re-presenting, or physically embodying the divine. In this way, they highlighted that devotion should not be directed towards them, as they are created from earthly matter, but rather that they are merely vehicles representing, signifying or symbolising the sacred: God, Christ, the Virgin, and Saints. Thus, the artworks stressed that they did not embody the divine or God, but merely represented it, not by impersonating (eliciting God's presence in the world), but through illustrating the holy as a visible sign, indexing the sacred. Their role is to merely intercede between the earthly and celestial realms. They cannot be 'invisible:' they do not provide a direct sight of God "face to face," as described by St. Paul the Apostle in his description of contact with God after final salvation ("For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face" – 1 Corinthians 13:12). Images do not embody the sacred, they do not have the power to summon the divine, nor to establish direct contact with God. They can and are constrained to being merely a screen of the holy, a mediation. Consequently, they should present themselves as things, to ensure that no one perceives them as the divinity, or the sacred figure – and so they are not venerated. This prevents the offence of fetishizing holy objects, making them idols or false gods – pagan deities. Thus, they avoid accusations of encouraging idolatry and allow worshippers to overcome their fear of eliciting idolatry.

The late medieval images of Christ, the Virgin and saints bring together various central issues of the ontology and anthropology of images and image-making in Christianity. This includes the question of whether visualising the sacred – recreation, reflection, embodiment or simulacra of the divine – is legitimate and if it follows Christian doctrine. This uncertainty caused suspicion towards image-making and a fear of images coming to life, of their 'magical powers'. This fear of the image is an integral and constant element of Christianity. Present already in Antiquity, when various figures of deities were bound with ropes and chains, and when Plato rejected all mimetic art and poetry as creating a semblance of real life, and as such creating death. This fear became apparent in subsequent outbursts of iconoclasm, sacrilegious speeches and turmoil. It also stimulated those theologians who were radically opposed to image-making. Most notably Jean Gerson, Pierre d'Ailly, Gilles Deschamps and Nicolas de Clemange, c. 1400, or Nicholas of Cusa around the mid-fifteenth century, proclaimed the futility of the material image (Plato's *eidolon*) in relation to the intellectually and spiritually evoked image concealed by it (Plato's *eidon*, idea). According to ecclesiastical reformers such as Jean Gerson, and the proponents of *devotio moderna* teaching, such as Geert Groote, as well as mystics including Jan van Ruysbroeck (Ruusbroec), the category of seeing and visibility formed a foundation of the religious experience.

This category encompassed the mental image (contrasted with the material image) and experiencing the divine through imaginative, spiritual images, perceived in a sensual and physical way. This category was supposed to limit visionary experiences and – paradoxically – was a way to free the mind of the earthly images, which corrupted and constrained the soul. These material images merely recorded the spiritual visions, and at the same time as they stimulated the devotional imagination, they nourished the projection of other ‘pure’ images during meditative reflection– they became images of silence, and of contemplation. The material image aroused suspicion and various fears, including the fear of its magic power, its greed, which devoured pure spiritual sensations; of its potential to conceal what is true, holy, and metaphysical; of its superficiality, falsehood, and trickery; the emptiness of the material entity of every image and every representation, and finally the fear of substituting reality with mimesis.

Jean Baudrillard emphatically but perceptively defined this fear in his once celebrated book on simulations and simulacra:

[...] the Iconoclasts [...] sensed this omnipotence of simulacra [that is of material images], this facility they have of erasing God from the consciousnesses of people, and the overwhelming, destructive truth which they suggest: that ultimately there has never been any God; that only simulacra exist; indeed that God himself has only ever been his own simulacrum. Had they been able to believe that images only occulted or masked the Platonic idea of God, there would have been no reason to destroy them. One can live with the idea of a distorted truth. But their metaphysical despair came from the idea that the images concealed nothing at all, and that in fact they were not images, such as the original model would have made them [divine prototype, divine idea], but actually perfect simulacra forever radiant with their own fascination. But this death of the divine referential has to be exorcised at all cost [*i.e.* through the destruction of all images]. [...] the iconoclasts, who are often accused of despising and denying images, were in fact the ones who accorded them their actual worth, unlike the iconolaters, who saw in them only reflections and were content to venerate God at one remove. [...] the iconolaters possessed the most modern and adventurous minds, since, underneath the idea of the apparition of God in the mirror of images, they already enacted his death and his disappearance in the epiphany of his representations (which they perhaps knew no longer represented anything, and that they were purely a game, but that this was precisely the greatest game – knowing also that it is dangerous to unmask images, since they dissimulate the fact that there is nothing behind them).⁵

I am not an avid proponent of the French philosopher and his diagnosis of contemporary society as a single, huge simulation through images

5 J. Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulations,” in *Jean Baudrillard, Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2nd ed., 2001, p. 172.

(simulation of entity, in which images and visual symbols conceal nothingness). However, his remarks on iconoclasm touch upon the most important primary fears of the images.

The late medieval holy images of Christ were undoubtedly *simulacra* of the divinity: simulations of the existence of the real being through the illusion of the material image (to evoke the juxtaposition of the *eikon-eidolon* described by Plato in his *Sophist*, which defines the essence of *simulacrum*). They were – to cite neoplatonist theologian John Scotus Eriugena – *similes*, ‘simila’: semblances crafted by human hands, which simulate the existence of a prototype, a creative and uncreated divinity (*creat et non creatur*). As created, they do not create (*creatur et non creat*). They do not fashion an actual holiness, but merely repeat it, under the influence of the first causes of creation (the logos, the Word of God), empowered by the creative force (*creatur et creat*). In other words, as described by Lucretius (*De rerum natura*, Book 4, V, 30–53), they were simulacra as the external ‘skin’ of the actual entity. Divinity and sainthood were not directly present in them, as in a prototype (a holy icon or relics), but they merely resembled the holiness, constituting its ‘mark’ as different from Benjamin’s ‘aura’ of the original (as proposed by a post-modern, ‘post-Platonic’ thinker, Jacques Derrida, in his *La difference*). It does not mean that a theoretical reflection on the status of images accompanied the actual viewing of the Netherlandish images in the fifteenth century, but these terms grasp the illusionistic character of the images of Christ, the Virgin and saints at that time.

In these circumstances, it was necessary for the images to reveal and to highlight their entity as objects – material things, mere simulations of the higher entity (even if, as argued by Baudrillard, this entity was absent). Once again, this observation validates today’s efforts to look at the late medieval images as things.



Fig. 28: Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, 1432, Ghent, St. Bavo’s Cathedral – closed and opened views



Fig. 29: Painter from Robert Campin's workshop – the Master of Flémalle, *Holy Trinity (Pietas Patris)*, one of *The Flémalle Panels*, c. 1430, Frankfurt, Städel Museum



Fig. 30: Rogier van der Weyden, *Miraflores Altarpiece*, before 1445, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie

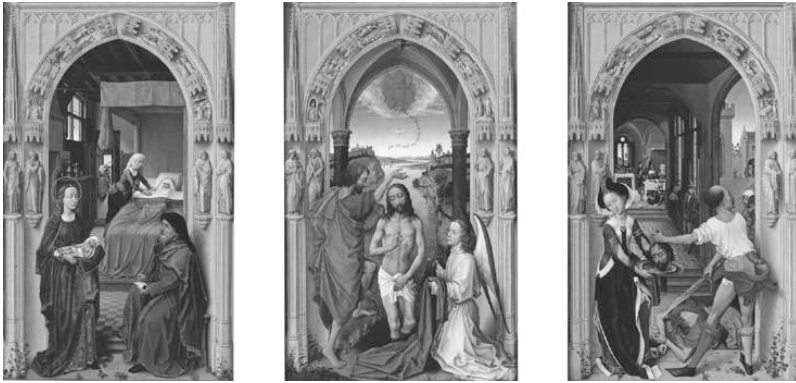


Fig. 31: Rogier van der Weyden, *St. John Altarpiece*, c. 1454–1460, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 32: Dirk Bouts or his workshop, *Triptych of the Life of the Virgin*, after 1458, Madrid, Museo del Prado



Fig. 33: Hans Memling, *Donne Triptych*, c. 1480, London, The National Gallery



Fig. 34: Hans Memling, *Reliquary of St. Ursula*, 1489, Bruges, Sint-Janshospitaal



Fig. 35: Rogier van der Weyden, *Descent from the Cross*, c. 1435 – before 1443, Madrid, Museo del Prado



Fig. 36: Tilman Riemenschneider, *Altarpiece of the Holy Blood*, 1501–1505, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Sankt Jakob's church



Fig. 37: Tilman Riemenschneider, *Altarpiece of the Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1505–1508, Creglingen, Herrgottskirche

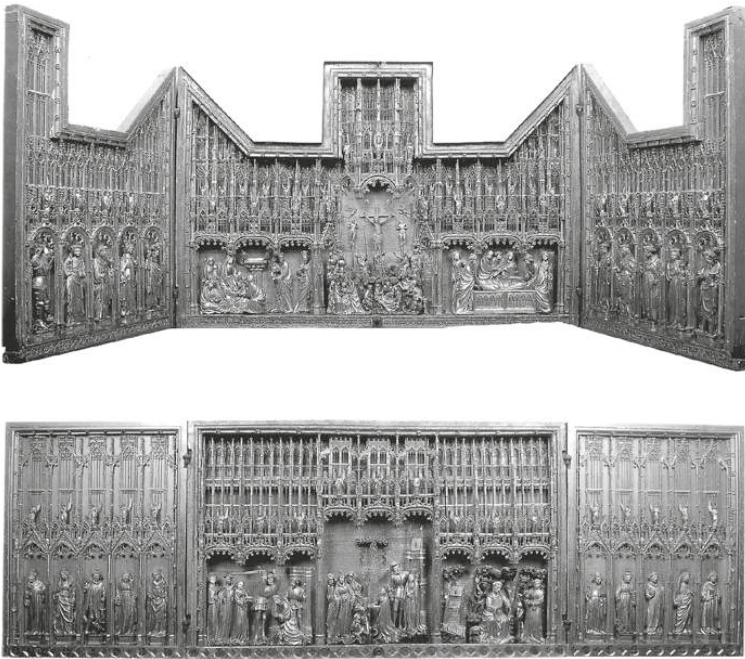


Fig. 38: Jacques de Baerze, *Altarpiece of the Crucifixion* (top) and *Altarpiece of All Saints and Martyrs* (below) from the Chartreuse de Champmol, 1390–1399, Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts

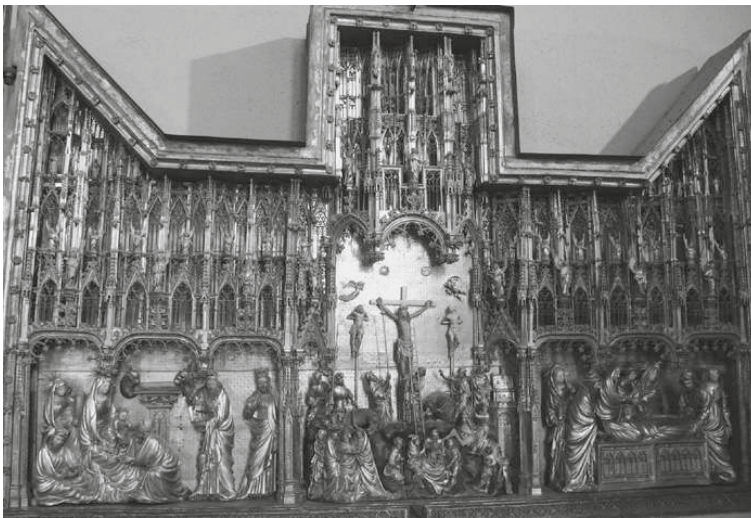


Fig. 39: Jacques de Baerze, *Altarpiece of the Crucifixion* from the Chartreuse de Champmol – central panel



Fig. 40: Jacques de Baerze, *Altarpiece of the Crucifixion* from the Chartreuse de Champmol – side panel



Fig. 41: Jean Pucelle, *Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum, The Cloisters Collection, 1954 (54.1.2), illuminations with the *Entombment* and *Flight into Egypt*, fol. 82v–83r



Fig. 42: Jean Pucelle, *Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum, The Cloisters Collection, 1954 (54.1.2), illuminations with the *Crucifixion* and the *Adoration of the Magi*, fol. 68v–69r



Fig. 43: André Beauneveu, *Jean de Berry praying to the Virgin and Child with Saints Andrew and John the Baptist*, illumination from *Les Très Belles Heures du duc de Berry*, 1400–1402, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms 11060, fol. 10–11



Fig. 44: Master of the Benson Portraits, *Double Portrait of a Married Couple*, c. 1540, Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh, open diptych and the joining of the panels in the form of a book binding



Fig. 45: Gerard Horenbout, *Visitation*, illumination from the *Sforza Hours*, 1519–1520, London, British Library, ms. Add 34294, fol. 61r



Fig. 46: Master E.S., *Apostles Philip and James the Lesser*, from the *Apostles* series, engraving, 1467, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1922 (22.83.3)



Fig. 47: Master E.S., the so-called *Great Madonna of Einsiedeln*, 1466, engraving, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett, A 409



Fig. 48: Master of the First Prayer book of Maximilian I (Master of Maximilian), illumination from the *Hastings Hours*, 1483, London, British Library, ms. Add. 54782



Fig. 49: Attributed to the Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian (Alexander Bening?), *Saint Luke* and painted border with dragonfly, in the *Grimani Breviary*, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Ms. Lat. I, 99, fol. 781v.



Fig. 50: Simon Bening, illumination from the *Imhoff Prayer Book*, 1511, London, Christie's, 21.06.1988, lot no. 107

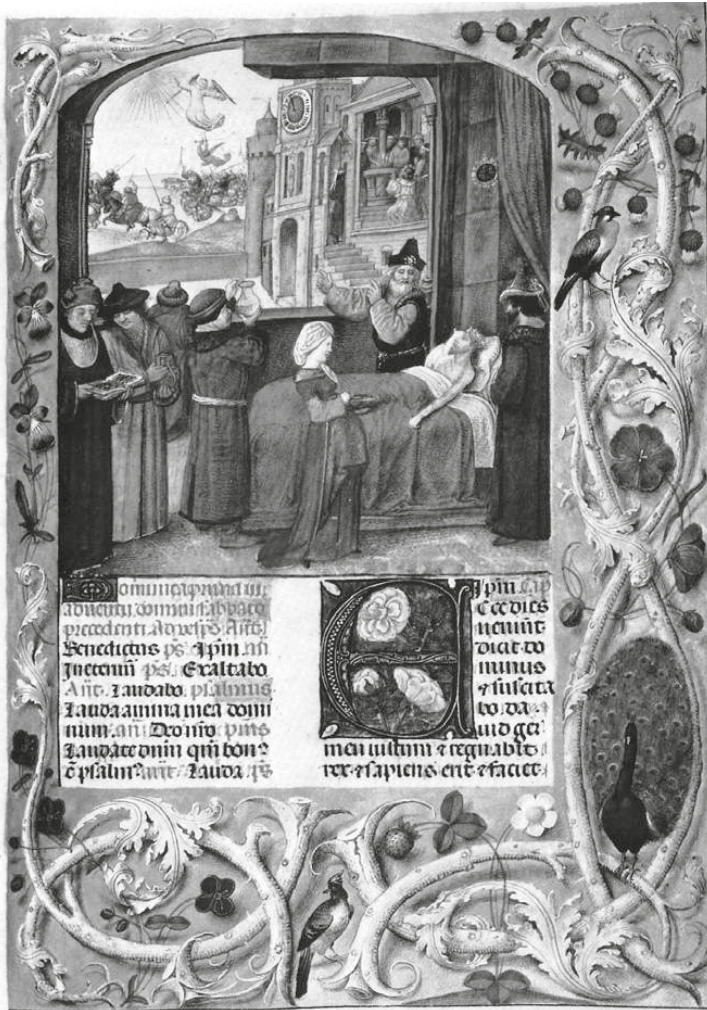


Fig. 51: Master of the Dresden Prayer Book, folio from the *Hours of Isabella the Catholic*, before 1497, London, Christie's Sales Catalogue, 6.7.2011, lot no. 26

I.3. Multisensory reception of the work of art

Late medieval images, through the illusionism embedded in them, elicited very clear sensory reactions, at times even multisensory, as they stimulated different senses. *The Descent from the Cross* by Rogier van der Weyden [fig. 52], now in the Prado, engaged not only the sense of sight but also the visual imagination.⁶ The painting was commissioned for the Chapel



Fig. 52: Rogier van der Weyden, *Descent from the Cross*, c. 1435 – before 1443, Madrid, Museo del Prado

6 *The Descent from the Cross* by Rogier van der Weyden in the Prado – D. De Vos, *Rogier van der Weyden. Das Gesamtwerk*, Munich 1999 (in English: *Rogier van der Weyden. The Complete Works*, Antwerp 1999), pp. 10–33, cat. no. 4, with the previous bibliography (hereinafter referred to as De Vos Rogier 1999); A. Châtelet, *Rogier van der Weyden. Problèmes de la vie et de l'oeuvre*, Strasbourg 1999, pp. 107–111; his, *Rogier van der Weyden / Rogier de le Pasture*, Milan–Paris 1999, pp. 48–52; R. Suckale, “Rogier van der Weydens Bild der Kreuzabnahme und sein Verhältnis zu Rhetorik und Theologie. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Erneuerung der



Fig. 53: *Ommegang* in Leuven in 1594, print from 1861 (in: Edward van Even, *L'Ommegang de Louvain*, Louvain–Bruxelles 1863)

Stilkritik,” in: *Meisterwerke der Malerei von Rogier van der Weyden bis Andy Warhol*, ed. R. Brandt, Leipzig 2001, pp. 10–44, reprinted in: his, *Stil und Funktion. Ausgewählte Schriften zur Kunst des Mittelalters*, ed. by P. Schmidt, G. Wedekind, Munich 2003 (2nd ed. 2008), pp. 409–431; F. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin: A Monographic Study with Critical Catalogue*, Munich–Berlin–London–New York 2002, pp. 109–130, cat. no. I.17; H. Schlie, *Bilder des Corpus Christi. Sakramentaler Realismus von Jan van Eyck bis Hieronymus Bosch*, Berlin 2002, pp. 324–328; V.M. Nieto Alcaide, *El Descendimiento de Van der Weyden*, Madrid 2003; A. Powell, “A Point ‘Ceaselessly Pushed Back’: The Origin of Early Netherlandish Painting,” *The Art Bulletin* 88, 2006, 4, pp. 707–728, here: 716–718; A. Powell, “The Errant Image: Rogier van der Weyden’s ‘Deposition from the Cross’ and Its Copies,” *Art History* 29, 2006, 4, pp. 540–562; F. Thürlemann, *Rogier van der Weyden. Leben und Werk*, Munich 2006, pp. 14–19; S. Kemperdick, J. Sander et al., *Der Meister von Flémalle und Rogier van der Weyden*, exh. cat., Städel Museum, Frankfurt a.M. – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie 2008–2009, pp. 76–78, cat. no. 6 and passim (hereinafter referred to as Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009); J. Van der Stock, “De Rugerio picture: Of Rogier the Painter,” in: L. Campbell, J. Van der Stock (eds.), *Rogier van der Weyden 1400/1464: Master of Passions*, exh. cat., M/Leuven, Zwolle–Leuven 2009, pp. 14–23, here: 19–21 (hereinafter referred to as Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier* 2009); L. Campbell, “The New Pictorial Language of Rogier van der Weyden,” in: *Rogier van der Weyden*

of Our Lady Outside the Walls at Leuven, founded in 1364 by the Great Crossbowmen's Guild to house, from 1365, a venerated figure of the Mother of Sorrows placed on the altar (or alternatively above the altar, or displayed next to it).⁷ Perhaps Rogier's painting was intended to replace or complement the carved sacred image. The members of the Guild participated biannually in processions, called *ommegangen*, to honour the Holy Sacrament and the Virgin Mary [fig. 53]. In the fifteenth century, during the second *ommegang* (the ancient and honourable tradition dated back to 895), horse wagons carried down the streets of the city living images and theatrical scenes, narrating key episodes from the Life of the Virgin, from the Annunciation to the Assumption.⁸ Since 1435 the *ommegang* also included episodes from the life of Christ. Documents from 1435 to 1440 describe platforms with scenes of the Crucifixion, in which a real

1400/1464..., pp. 32–59, here: pp. 34–47; A. Gonzalez Mozo, "The new IRRS of the 'Descent from the Cross' in the Prado," in: *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, (Le dessin sous-jacent et la technologie dans la peinture 17), ed. by L. Campbell et al., Paris–Leuven 2009, pp. 229–236; A. Mensger, "Die exakte Kopie, oder: die Geburt des Künstlers im Zeitalter seiner Reproduzierbarkeit," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 59, 2009 (2010), pp. 194–221; S. Kemperdick, "Von der Vorlage zum Kunstwerk. Rogier van der Weydens 'Große Kreuzabnahme,'" in: *Original – Kopie – Zitat. Kunstwerke des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit. Wege der Aneignung – Formen der Überlieferung*, ed. by W. Augustyn, U. Söding, Passau 2010, pp. 207–230; Ch. Taxer, *Seele ordnen. Zur Darstellung und Erzeugung von Emotionen bei Rogier van der Weyden*, Frankfurt a.M. 2011; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 112–114, 170, 243–245 (with bibliography in the footnotes), 260–264 (with further bibliography in the footnotes), 439–442; A.K. Powell, *Depositions: Scenes from the Late Medieval Church and the Modern Museum*, New York, 2012; J.R. Hammerschmidt, "Beyond Vision: The Impact of Rogier van der Weyden's 'Descent from the Cross,'" in: *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by W. de Boer, Ch. Göttler, Leiden 2012 [2013], pp. 201–217; L. Campbell et al., *Rogier van der Wyden and the Kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula*, exh. cat., Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid 2015, cat. no. 1 and passim.

7 This might have been the Pietà, which fourteenth- and fifteenth-century sources described as located in the chapel.

8 J.A. Torfs, *Geschiedenis van Leuven van den vroegsten tijd tot op heden*, Leuven 1899, pp. 91–92; M. Trowbridge, "The 'Stadschilder' and the 'Serment': Rogier van der Weyden's Deposition and the Crossbowmen of Louvain," *Dutch Crossing* 23, 1999, pp. 5–28, on p. 9; for the description of *ommegang* see: E. van Even, *Geschiedenis van Leuven geschreven in de jaren 1593 en 1594 door Willem Boonen*, Leuven 1980, pp. 245–256; G. Verlinden, *Ommegang en toneel te Leuven in de late Middeleeuwen*, dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 1982, p. 72 and passim; K. van Vlierden, "De Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe-ommegang van Leuven," in: *Het Laatgotische Beeldsnijcentrum Leuven*, Leuven 1979, pp. 348–349.

actor, tied to the cross, enacted Christ's suffering. This means that the members of the Great Crossbowmen's Guild almost simultaneously, over the course of the same day, saw Rogier's painting and the scene during the procession. The painted visualisation of *The Descent from the Cross* with its illusionistic imitation of the Virgin's suffering and the tormented body of Christ, complemented the "actual" representation of Christ on cross. Since 1437 the re-enactments during the processions included also the Last Supper, the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Calvary, that is, the Crucifixion witnessed by the Virgin and other attendant figures; it is possible that the performance also included the Descent from the Cross, or the related scenes of the Entombment or the Lamentation. What became important was not the physical presence of the guild's painting either through its inclusion in the procession, or through the visit to the chapel, but the imaginative, mutual complementing of the *omwegang* and Rogier's painting. Thus, the panel gained new contexts established by representations featuring real actors. Undoubtedly, this enabled a more tangible, sensory experience, which shifted from a simply visual to a haptic and multisensory experience. Moreover, the theatrical representation enabled the spatial experience of the scene, through the tactility, corporeality and movement of the actors. The dramatized Crucifixion and enacted role of the Mother of Sorrows enhanced the painted image with the new suggestion of various experiences. It appealed to the sense of space in its composition, with its illusionistic imitation of the wooden retable; the retable, in which tightly arranged figures hardly fit into the constrained space and seem to step out – or seemingly slip away – towards the viewer, into the real interior of the chapel. Now, through the context of the scenes re-enacted during the processions, the member of the guild mapped the pictorial and quasi-sculptural space onto the actual topography of his town, onto the space known to him, apprehended empirically, temporally and directly. The viewer mentally and imaginatively associated the body of Christ from the painted panel with the physique of the actor, bound to the cross on the procession platform. Consequently, the image appealed more strongly to the sense of touch, the experience of weight and mass. With greater ease the viewer-believer imagined the burden carried by the figures depicted in Rogier's panel, and could fully engage with the body positioned deliberately in such a way as if the painted protagonists were handing Christ over to the beholder, standing by the altar during the mass. The faithful could take the body as a mystical *corpus mysticum Domini Jhesu Christi*, present at the Eucharist and distributed during Holy Communion, or as a physical, human body possessing a specific, familiar weight, volume and mass. This, clearly, facilitated the understanding – through visualisation and more importantly through visualised sensation – of the real change of the body

into bread, the transubstantiation, which constituted the dogmatic meaning of the sacrament. The procession and the image jointly enabled a sensory engagement with the pain of Christ, the Virgin and other participants of the scene: the living actor from the cross suffered, sweated and heavily lowered his head; his body presumably carried painted wounds on his feet, hands and side, which in turn were so veristically depicted by Rogier. Similarly, the tears shed by the Virgin, Mary Magdalene and other figures acted as a reminder of the tears of those participating in the spectacles held during the procession. Perhaps this recent, directly experienced painful memory did not encourage the beholders to automatically and inevitably cry in front of the panel. During the procession the crowd inhaled various urban scents, including the participants' own bodily odour. The streets carried the discernible and distinct smells of sweat and blood, palpable, presumably, among the acting figures as well as among the members of the guild assembled in the chapel. The sensory experience of the procession complemented, or even filled, the painted composition with sounds – desperate voices, laments, cries, or their absence – silence and daunting stillness. In other words, the theatrical image established during the procession, spectacle or *tableau vivant*, enlivened and nourished the painterly image, allowing it to engage various senses; not only sight, but also touch, smell and sound.

The late medieval image (be it a painted panel or a figure) was itself mobile or aimed at animating the viewer; it activated the entire sensorium; through encouraging the experience of specific space, weight, mass and volume; it encouraged manual manipulation. It was an active agent (*agens*, agent-actor according to Bruno Latour), a thing actively exhorting its power on people, their actions, rituals and customs; it was engaged in creating social ties, a network of the interdependencies of civilisation and nature. Nowadays, this active role of the image has disappeared through the process of museumization. Image-things have ceased to be independent objects, becoming works of art entrapped by their role of exhibits, something that only expresses (exhibits) the subjective, extra-material: ideology, religion, aesthetics. It does not *constitute*, it only *expresses*. Thus, art renounced its objects, which is not only non-material but also preposterous. Therefore, let us reconstruct in this book an historic active role of things, late medieval and early modern objects of art.

II. OBJECTS IN SPACE: THE MOBILITY OF THE BEHOLDER

II.1. Objects suspended in space

The visual culture of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries altered the human perception of spatial scale. Previous centuries accepted a clear division between large-scale architectural structures, monumental sculpture and painting, and small objects: between a cathedral and a large church, with their statues or frescoes, and small, portable sculptural or metalwork objects. In the Late Middle Ages, the objects were categorised according to a more detailed scale, with wide-ranging measurements from a monumental building to tiny *objets d'art*. The large scale of buildings was complemented by the micro-architectural structures (such as the retable or a rood screen), and by various sculptural forms suspended in space, in the air, high in the interior, and intended to be viewed not only from below but from multiple perspectives, locating the viewers in the space or encouraging them to circle around [fig. 54]. We shall now turn to these, because they actively influenced the beholder-believer.

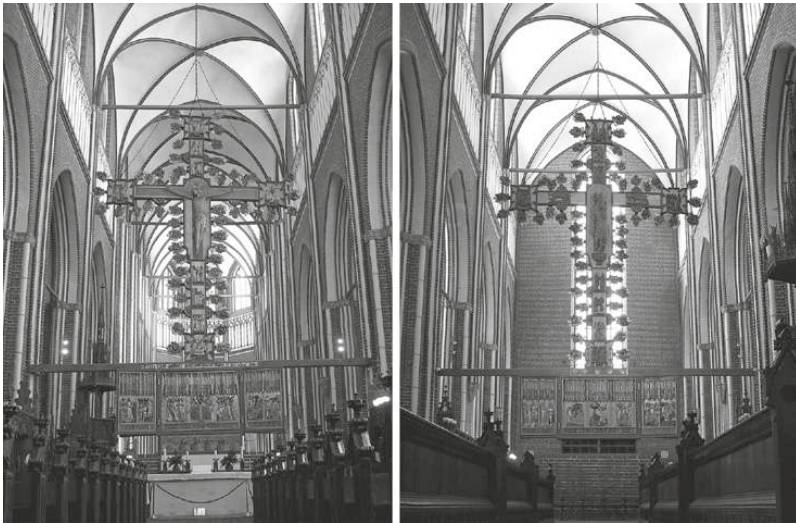


Fig. 54: The double sided Triumphant Cross in the Doberan Minster (former Cistercian monastery), c. 1360–1370, placed between the conventual choir in the eastern part and the lay brothers' choir in the western part – view of the both sides

Looking at the object from various, if not all, sides, and the different views recorded by the beholder, who shifts his/her position to gain the complete image of the thing and to experience the multifaceted mutable and continuous space around it, defined afresh the viewing of art by the artist and the beholder. This new visual investigation is best illustrated by Pisanello's drawing from c. 1438 (London, British Museum) [fig. 55], which captures multiple views of the hanged men on gallows. The suspended – quite literally – object of observation is a subject of unhealthy curiosity, and of an inquisitive inquiry into the complexity of viewing. Other drawings by artists working at that time similarly address the intricate character of the optical perception of objects in space, including numerous studies by Leonardo da Vinci, showing horses in movement or the group of St. George with a dragon in the British Royal Collection (Windsor Castle). Albrecht Dürer similarly investigated the multiple views of the figure of St. Christopher carrying the Infant Christ (1521, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett) [fig. 56]. The same interest is clear in Antonio Pollaiuolo's nude bodies in his engraving *Battle of the Naked Men* from 1470–75, with a single, muscular body in motion, used to define ten figures from different views [fig. 57]. Marcantonio Raimondi in his engraving *The Climbers* dated 1510 employed a similar compositional solution [fig. 58]. This desire to view the thing simultaneously from the front, back and sides is satisfied by seeing the object in its totality, all at once but at the same time as a sum of its distinctive sections, immersed or suspended in the air, seen from a perspective which reveals the object's shape and gives full insight into its nature. This rule was fulfilled in the viewing of different works of art destined to be suspended high in the air within a vast room, or in a church.

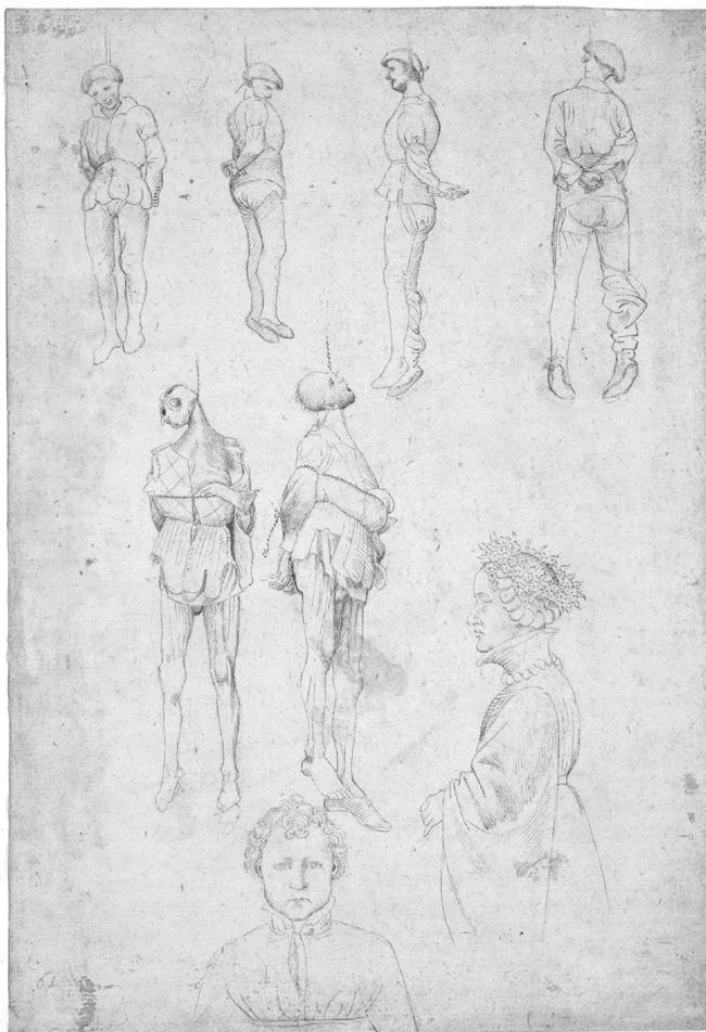


Fig. 55: Pisanello, *Hanged Man*, drawing, c. 1438, London, British Museum, 1895,0915.441



Fig. 56: Albrecht Dürer, *Study Sheet with Nine Sketchs of St. Christopher*, drawing, 1521, Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, KdZ 4477

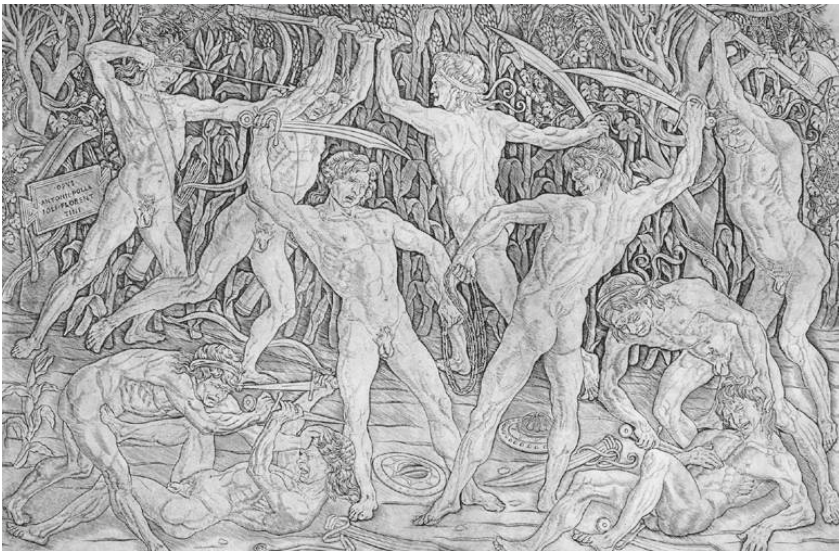


Fig. 57: Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Battle of the Nude Men*, engraving, c. 1470–1475, Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 34-188



Fig. 58: Marcantonio Raimondi, *The Climbers*, engraving, 1510, New York, The Metropolitan Museum, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1917 (17.50.56)

There is an ancient tradition of suspending various objects from a vault or ceiling, including candelabra, such as the Romanesque *Kronleuchter* in churches in Aachen, Cologne or Hildesheim, but they were not carved with figurative decoration. In the Late Middle Ages, apart from candelabra with elaborate forms, church interiors were filled with suspended sculptural groups of the Annunciation and the Virgin of the Rosary. Scenes of the Crucifixion or Crucifixes were placed high on the rood beam dividing the nave, meant for the general congregation, from the choir. They do not divide the space, but unify the interior of the late Gothic church, which was designed to be uniform, consistent and homogenous.



Fig. 59: Veit Stoss, *The Angelic Salutation* (*Englischer Gruß* or *Engelsgruß*), 1517–1518, Nuremberg, Church of St. Lawrence



Fig. 60: Veit Stoss, *The Angelic Salutation* – lowered onto the church floor, view of the back

The most spectacular example of an object suspended inside a church is the *Angelic Salutation* by Veit Stoss in St. Lawrence's Church in Nuremberg [figs. 59–61].⁹ Commissioned by a Nuremberg patrician, Anton II Tucher, and created between 1517–1518, the grouping of the Annunciation is framed by a garland of roses, with medallions and a suspended rosary; the composition is crowned by the bust of God the Father, and is complemented by music-making angels. Its dimensions are 5 meters in height and 3.2 meters in width.

⁹ Veit Stoss, *The Angelic Salutation*, St. Lawrence Church, Nuremberg: H. Bauer, G. Stolz, M. Molander, *Engelgruss und Sakramentshaus in St. Lorenz zu Nürnberg*, Königstein i. T. 1974 (2nd ed. 1989); *500 Jahre Rosenkranz: 1475 Köln 1975: Kunst und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter und ihr Weiterleben*, exh. cat., Diözesanmuseum, Cologne 1975, p. 30 and ff.; J. Taubert, "Der Englische Gruß des Veit Stoß in Nürnberg," in: his, *Farbige Skulpturen. Bedeutung, Fassung, Restaurierung*,

It is truly monumental, yet not hieratic, as the group is highly animated. Though the composition seems frontal, the dynamic movement of the figure and the airiness of the entire object force the viewer to look up when walking below it, and thus to view it from both sides. The backs of the figures are highly finished: the Virgin's hair, as well as the angel's hairstyle and wings of peacock feathers, and the folds of the angelic draperies, are all minutely characterised. The versos of the medallions depict the sun, moon and stars of the firmament, thus identifying the Virgin as the Queen of Heaven and also as the Virgin of the Apocalypse; you have to walk around the sculpture and view it from the back to grasp how the Madonna of the Humility, the humble Virgin, who willingly accepts the message of the Annunciation and fulfils the act of the Incarnation, becomes the Virgin Triumphant in the heavens, beside God the Father and the

Munich 1978, pp. 60–72; M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, New Haven–London 1980, in German *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer. Tilman Riemenschneider, Veit Stoss und ihre Zeitgenossen*, Munich 1984, 4th revised edition 2004, pp. 344–345; H. Stafski, “Der Englische Gruss des Veit Stoss für die Frauenkirche in Nürnberg,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 46, 1983, no. 4, pp. 341–356; *Veit Stoss in Nürnberg. Werke des Meister und seiner Schule in Nürnberg und Umgebung*, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg, Munich 1983, pp. 194–209; *Der Englische Gruß des Veit Stoss zu St. Lorenz in Nürnberg*, (Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Arbeitsheft 16), Munich 1983; R. Kahsnitz, “Veit Stoss in Nürnberg,” *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* 1984, pp. 39–70; K.J. Klinkhammer SJ, “Frömmigkeitsgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen zum Englischen Gruß,” in: *Veit Stoss. Die Vorträge des Nürnberger Symposions*, ed. by R. Kahsnitz, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg – Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte Munich, Munich 1985, pp. 183–191; E. König, “Stilgeschichtliche Überlegungen zum Englischen Gruß,” in: *Veit Stoss. Die Vorträge...*, pp. 193–206; Ch. Mechat, *Veit Stoss. Ein deutscher Künstler zwischen Nürnberg und Krakau*, Bonn 1984; P. Skubiszewski, *Veit Stoss, Warsaw–Dresden* 1985; C. Schleif, “Donatio et Memoria. Stifter, Stiftungen und Motivationen an Beispielen aus der Lorenzkirche in Nürnberg,” Munich 1990; Th. Noll, “Der ‘Englische Gruß’ des Veit Stoss. Ikonographie und Frömmigkeit,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 56/57, 2002/2003 (2004), pp. 115–143; D. Ganz, “Ein krentzlein aus Bildern. Der Englische Gruss des Veit Stoss und die Genese spätmittelalterlicher Bild-Rosarien,” in: *Der Rosenkranz. Andacht, Geschichte, Kunst*, ed. by U.-B. Frei and F. Bühler, Bern 2003, pp. 152–169; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 218–219; V. Ostermayer, Th. Bachmann, *Der Engelsgruß von Veit Stoss in St. Lorenz, Nürnberg*, Nuremberg 2007; F.M. Kammel, “Der Englische Gruss. Legendäres Kunstwerk und Monument der Marienverehrung,” in: *500 Jahre Engelsgruß in St. Lorenz Nürnberg*, Lindenberg i. Allgäu 2018, pp. 27 ff; S. Nienas, “Die materialisierte Erscheinung. Aspekte zu Raum und Polychromie des Englischen Grusses von Veit Stoss,” in: *500 Jahre Engelsgruß...*, pp. 63 ff.; K. Ulrieh-Eschemann, “Der Engelsgruss zwischen Himmel und Erde im Gottesdienst,” in: *500 Jahre Engelsgruß...*, pp. 95 ff.

Son, witnessing the salvation of mankind. In other words, the sculpture is not meant to be viewed statically, from the front but rather it is destined to be looked at while walking, first from the front – viewing simultaneously the Crucifixion above the high altar (carved by Veit Stoss's workshop), and subsequently from the back after walking further down the main nave. The construction of the piece animates the viewer, with its airiness reminiscent of tracery. The form, with its elliptical rose garland, encourages also the movement of sight to ensure the correct direction of the reading of the scenes in the medallions, which show the mysteries of the rosary. They are organised clockwise from the bottom to the top, from left to right, as if from the seventh to the fifth hour: The Nativity, The Adoration of the Magi, The Resurrection, The Ascension, and Pentecost, with two scenes at the top positioning the Virgin in the soteriological and triumphant context of the Resurrection and of God the Father in heaven: The Dormition of the Virgin and her Coronation.

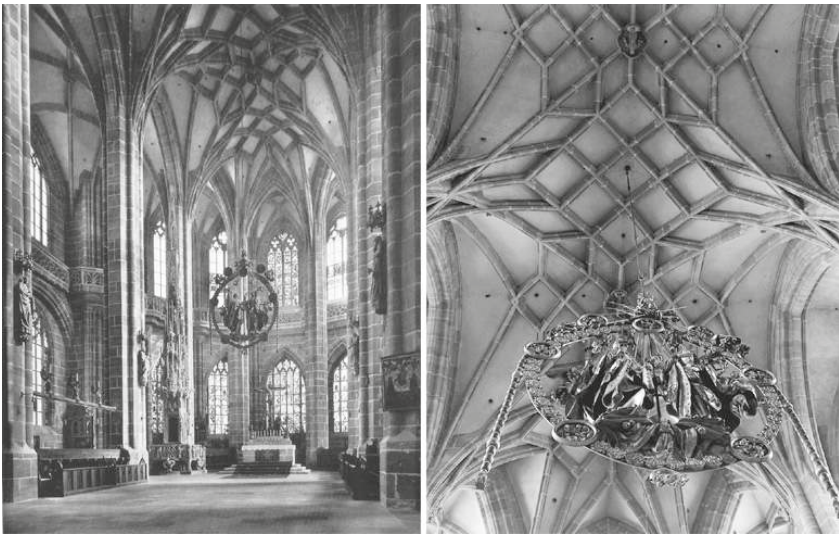


Fig. 61: Veit Stoss, *The Angelic Salutation* as seen in the space of the church and the view from below

This paratheatrical arrangement of the viewer's movement and direction of the gaze was further informed by the unveiling and veiling of the statue. The drapery cover of the figure was mounted already in 1519 on a wooden and metal support, which was meant to cover the entire work and protect

it from the light and dust, and to conceal it during the Lent. The cover was never intended to be iconoclastic, as was previously believed, but merely practical.¹⁰ To unveil the group and to reveal it to the faithful, the sculpture needed to be lowered towards the floor on a chain, on which it hung under the vault. It was not until 1529, when the City Council decided to abandon this practice that the sculpture also remained veiled during feast days, on which previously the group could have been admired in its full glory.



Fig. 62: Workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider, *The Virgin in the Rose Garland*, 1521–1524, Kirchberg Church near Volkach

10 C. Christiansen, "Iconoclasm and the Preservation of Ecclesiastical Art in Nürnberg," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 61, 1970, pp. 205–221.



Fig. 63: Workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider, *The Virgin in the Rose Garland* as seen in the pilgrims' church

The function of another, similar sculpture from the workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider, *The Virgin in the Rose Garland* from the Kirchberg Church near Volkach, is more obscure [figs. 62–63].¹¹ Carved in 1521–1524

11 **Tilman Riemenschneider, workshop, *Madonna from Volkach***: J. Bier, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, (4 vols, Würzburg–Augsburg–Vienna 1925–1978), vol. IV: *Die späten Werke in Holz*, Vienna 1978, pp. 83–97, 125–126; I. Kalden, *Tilman Riemenschneider – Werkstattleiter in Würzburg. Beiträge zur Organisation einer Bildschnitzer- und Steinbildhauerwerkstatt im ausgehenden Mittelalter*, Ammersbek bei Hamburg 1990, pp. 140–142; J.Ch. Smith, “A Fragile Legacy: Würzburg’s Sculpture after Riemenschneider,” in: *Tilman Riemenschneider, c. 1460–1531*, ed. J. Chapuis, (symposium: National Gallery of Art, Washington 1999; *Studies in the History of Art* 65, 2004), Yale University Press, New Haven–London 2004, pp. 179–201, here on p. 180; I. Kalden-Rosenfeld, *Tilman Riemenschneider und seine Werkstatt. Mit einem Katalog der allgemein als Arbeiten Riemenschneiders und seiner Werkstatt akzeptierten Werke*, 2nd ed. revised, Königstein i. T. 2004, pp. 118–120, cat. no. 81; W. Bruckner, “Kult und Kunst um 1500. Riemenschneider und die Glaubenswelt seiner Zeit,” in: *Tilman Riemenschneider, Werke seiner Glaubenswelt*, ed. by J. Lenssen, M. Koller, W. Schneider et al., exh. cat., Museum am Dom, Würzburg, Regensburg 2004, pp. 31–49, here pp. 46–47.

in a Catholic milieu, it was made for a pilgrim church with a venerated and miraculous figure of the Pietà. *The Virgin*, carved by Riemenschneider, (or more specifically by his workshop assistant or assistants) was commissioned by the local Confraternity of the Rosary. The figure was not concealed in any way, presumably except for Lent, and was permanently visible to the eyes of the faithful. The occasional veiling of the statue would have been possible as the sculpture hung significantly lower than Stoss's sculpture in Nuremberg, below the rood screen in the presbytery. The *Virgin* is large (2.8 x 1.9 m), although not as monumental as *The Angelic Salutation* by Stoss. Every scene and detail is clearly legible. The figure of the Virgin and Child (seemingly modelled on Riemenschneider's *Madonna* from the Dumbarton Oaks Collection in Washington) is framed by rays of light, figures of angels and putti and the rose garland, with five medallions. As in the previous example, the scenes should be read clockwise, here starting from the top, at twelve o'clock, from the scene of the Annunciation, through the Visitation, the Nativity, and the Adoration of the Magi to the Dormition of the Virgin. The viewer needs to go to the other side of the group to see the reverses of the medallions and behold the motifs of the Passion of Christ, which highlight the role of the Virgin in the salvation of mankind, depicted through the bleeding wounds of Christ in his pierced heart, hands and feet. In the case of this figure, the access to the verso involved entering the choir, reserved for the clergy. Therefore, *The Virgin from Volkach* did not provide an equally elaborate spectacle to that of the *Angelic Salutation* by Stoss in the St. Lawrence Church in Nuremberg; however, with its airy structure and suspension in the air it continued to intrigue the eyes of the beholder.



Fig. 64: Workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider, *Double Madonna*, c. 1515–1520, Würzburg, Museum für Franken (former Mainfränkisches Museum)

Undoubtedly, the so-called *Double Madonna* from the workshop of Riemenschneider was originally meant to be suspended.¹² Today in the Museum für Franken (Mainfränkisches Museum) in Würzburg (c. 1515–1520) [fig. 64], this double-sided figure (90.5cm) is formed of two figures of the Virgin in a very low relief, shown holding the Christ Child either on the left or on the right arm. Originally the figure was framed by the radiant glory. It is possible that the figure was once displayed in a similar way to *The Virgin from Volkach*, as an independent sculpture, or it could have been a part of a decorative suspended candlestick. The latter possibility can be surmised from the candlestick showing Mary as the Assunta or the Virgin of the Apocalypse surrounded by a mandorla and accompanied by the angels, with a verso depicting an unidentified figure of a bishop saint, in the church of St. John in Lüneburg. It is the work of an anonymous German artist from c. 1490, commissioned by the guild

12 Tilman Riemenschneider, workshop, *The Double Madonna in Würzburg: Tilman Riemenschneider, Werke seiner Blütezeit*, ed. by C. Lichte, I. Kalden-Rosenfeld et al., exh. cat., Mainfränkisches Museum Würzburg, Regensburg 2004, cat. no. 9 (with previous bibliography).

of furriers [fig. 65].¹³ Another example of this type of sculptural decoration is the Virgin and Child standing on the crescent moon, following the iconography of the Assunta or the Virgin of the Apocalypse, from the Chapel of St. Michael in Kiedrich (Hesse, Rheingau) dated c. 1520 from the workshop of Hans Backoffen, attributed to Peter Schro.¹⁴ [fig. 66]



Fig. 65: Unknown German sculptor, Candlestick with *The Assunta* and an unidentified bishop saint, c. 1490, Lüneburg, Church of St. John

13 Candlestick with *The Assunta* in the church of St. John in Lüneburg: C. Wolff, *Stadt Lüneburg*, (*Die Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Hannover*, Hannover 1899–1927), Hannover 1906; E. Peter, *Lüneburg – Geschichte einer 1000-jährigen Stadt 956–1956*, Museumsverein für das Fürstentum Lüneburg, 2nd edition, Lüneburg 1999; Th. Kirschbaum, *Lüneburg – Leben in einer spätmittelalterlichen Großstadt*, Wernigerode 2000.

14 Peter Schro, workshop of Hans Backoffen, a candelabra with the Virgin on the Moon Crescent in the Chapel of St. Michael in Kiedrich: F. Cremer, *Handbuch der deutschen Kunstdenkmäler. Hessen II. Regierungsbezirk Darmstadt*, Munich 2008, pp. 507–508



Fig. 66: Workshop of Hans Backoffen (Peter Schro?), Candlestick the Virgin of the Apocalypse, c. 1520, Kiedrich (Hesse, Rheingau), Chapel of St. Michael

Riemenschneider and other late medieval sculptors from southern Germany at times created the illusion that the retable was suspended, when it was in fact was designed to stand solidly on the altar. Through its elongated proportions and the airiness of its structure, the celebrated *Altar of the Holy Blood* in Rothenburg, with its scene of the Last Supper carved by Riemenschneider (1500–1504)¹⁵ [fig. 67], seemingly floats in the air. This is thanks to its

15 **Tilman Riemenschneider, *Altarpiece in Rothenburg***: V. Mayr, “Die drei grossen Restaurierungen der St.-Jakobs-Kirche,” in: *500 Jahre St. Jakob Rothenburg ob der Tauber*, Rothenburg ob der Tauber 1985, pp. 41–53; B. Welzel, *Abendmahlsaltäre vor der Reformation*, dissertation Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 1991; B. Welzel, “Tilman Riemenschneider und das Bildprogramm des Heiligblut-Altars in Rothenburg o. T.,” in: *Flügelaltäre des späten Mittelalters*, (colloquium: Münnerstadt 1990), ed. by H. Krohm, E. Oellermann, Berlin 1992, pp. 198–209; Ch. Trepesch, “Tilman Riemenschneiders Heiligblutaltar. Überlegungen zur Gestaltung des Dunkels,” in: *Von Altdorfer bis Serra. Schülerfestschrift für Lorenz Dittmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by I. Besch et al., St. Ingbert 1993, pp. 25–33. See also in the general studies: J. Bier, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, 4 vols., Würzburg–Augsburg–Vienna, 1925–1978; A. Diehl, *Tilman Riemenschneider: der grosse deutsche Bildhauer und Bildschnitzer: Ein Führer zu seinen Werken in Würzburg, Bamberg, Rothenburg, Münnerstadt, Creglingen, Volkach, Maidbronn und anderwärts im Frankenlande*, Würzburg 1931, new revised edition 1936; F. Knapp, *Riemenschneider*, Bielefeld–Leipzig 1935, 2nd revised edition 1936; K. Gerstenberg, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, Vienna, 1941, 5th new revised edition Munich 1962; J. Bier, *Tilman Riemenschneider. Ein Gedenkbuch*, Vienna 1948; K. Grönig, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, Osterode 1950; M. von Freeden, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, Munich 1954, 5th revised edition 1981; E. Fründt, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, Berlin 1975; L. Bruhns, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, Königstein i.T. 1976; J. Hotz, *Tilman Riemenschneider*, Munich 1977; J. Bier, *Tilman Riemenschneider: His Life and Work*, Lexington 1982; H. Muth, *Tilman Riemenschneider und seine Werke*, Würzburg 1978, 3rd revised edition 1982; M. Baxandall, *Limewood Sculptors...*, pp. 337–338; *Tilman Riemenschneider. Frühe Werke*, exh. cat., Mainfränkisches Museum, Würzburg 1981; M.J. Liebmann, *Die deutsche Plastik 1350–1550*, Leipzig 1982, pp. 288–350; H. Muth, *Tilman Riemenschneider. Die Werke des Bildschnitzers und Bildhauers, seiner Werkstatt und seines Umkreises im Mainfränkischen Museum in*

placement on a pierced, arcaded predella, as well as its central panel depicting Christ's passover with His apostles, rendered translucent due to the inclusion of real glass windows in the chamber where the feast is happening, seen against the setting of the actual church windows, as well as the thoroughly transparent nature of the tracery crowning the entire structure. However, this is merely an illusion and the work was originally intended and continues to be viewed frontally, whilst it stands on the altar rather than being suspended.

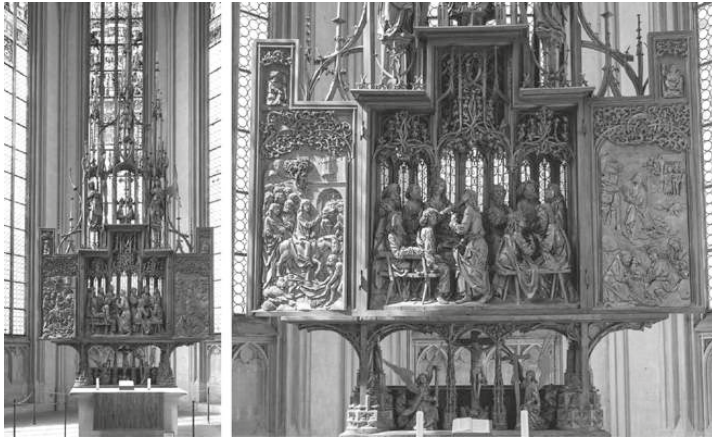


Fig. 67: Tilman Riemenschneider, *Altar of the Holy Blood*, 1501–1505, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Sankt Jakob's church

Würzburg, Würzburg 1982; I. Kalden, *Tilman Riemenschneider. Werkstattleiter in Würzburg. Beiträge zur Organisation einer Bildschnitzer- und Steinbildhauerwerkstatt*, Ammersbek bei Hamburg 1990; J. Chapuis et al., *Tilman Riemenschneider: Master Sculptor of the Late Middle Ages*, exh. cat., The National Gallery of Art, Washington – The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1999–2000, Yale University Press, New Haven–London 1999; *Tilman Riemenschneider, c. 1460–1531*, ed. by J. Chapuis, (symposium: National Gallery of Art, Waszyngton 1999; *Studies in the History of Art 65*, 2004), Yale University Press, New Haven–London 2004; *Tilman Riemenschneider*, vol. 1: *Werke seiner Glaubenswelt*, ed. by J. Lenssen, contributions by M. Koller, W. Schneider et al., exh. cat., Museum am Dom, Würzburg, vol. 2: *Werke seiner Blütezeit*, ed. by C. Lichte, contributions by I. Kalden-Rosenfeld et al., exh. cat., Mainfränkisches Museum Würzburg, Regensburg 2004; I. Kalden-Rosenfeld, *Tilman Riemenschneider und seine Werkstatt. Mit einem Katalog der allgemein als Arbeiten Riemenschneiders und seiner Werkstatt akzeptierten Werke* (in English *Tilman Riemenschneider: The Sculptor and His Workshop, with a catalogue of works generally accepted*), 2nd revised edition, Königstein i.T. 2004, 4th revised edition Königstein i.T. 2011; H. Muth, T. Schneiders, *Tilman Riemenschneider. Bildschnitzer zu Würzburg*, Würzburg 2004; H. Muth, I. Kalden-Rosenfeld, *Riemenschneider in Franken*, Königstein i.T. 2009; E. Schneider, “Wer war Tilman Riemenschneider? Versuch einer biographischen Skizze,” *Mainfränkisches Jahrbuch für Geschichte und Kunst* 62, 2010, pp. 61–90.



Fig. 68: Unknown German sculptor, candlesticks with the Virgin and Child, Christ on the Cross and St. George, St. John the Baptist and Sts. Catherine and Ursula, c. 1490, Lüneburg, town hall, Fürstensaal – archival photo

Apart from the candlestick in the church in Lüneburg, with its form of a figure surrounded by airy architecture, there are other candlesticks from the same workshop displayed in the city's town hall, which show the Virgin and Child, Christ on the Cross and St. George, St. John the Baptist and Sts. Catherine and Ursula [fig. 68]. The form of the sculpture combined with the animals' antlers and foliage gained popularity in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century chandeliers suspended from the ceilings in town hall rooms. Relatively numerous examples of this type of sculptural decoration have survived, including decoration in Lüneburg, Goslar and Basel. A chandelier from the workshop of Riemenschneider (c. 1515) now in a private collection, held in a deposit of the Museum für Franken in Würzburg, is a derivation from this type of decoration, defined as *Lüsterweibchen* – a chandelier in a form of a girl between deer's antlers [fig. 69].¹⁶ The girl holds the coat-of-arms of Ochsenfurt, as the object comes from that city's

16 Candelabra of a *Lüsterweibchen* (*Leuchterweibchen*) type: *Spätgotik in Salzburg. Skulptur u. Kunstgewerbe*, exh. cat., Salzburg 1976, cat. no. 75; J. Leeuwenberg, "Geweikronen ook in Nederland" *Antiek* 13, 1978, no. 3, pp. 161–198; *Spätmittelalter am Oberrhein*, part 2: *Alltag, Handwerk und Handel 1350–1525*, ed. by J. Krüger et al., exh. cat. Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe 2001–2002, cat. no. 239; I. Herpers, G.J. Pfeiffer, "‘vyf waslecht up dat hartestwyh’. Der

town hall.¹⁷ Large, spreading antlers with a half-figure of the patrician lady, once suspended in a public space, combined animal motifs with human representation; nature with art. This undoubtedly evoked erotic innuendos in the mind of the beholder (a woman conquered by the hunter, as an animal trophy), whilst at the same time suggesting (in a vaguely platonic manner) the significance of overcoming biological corporeality, temptations and desires through the contemplation of an ideal, maiden beauty. However, the crucial aspect of this composition was its spectacular, curious form, destined to be admired and to inspire awe with its intricacy. The earliest known example of the *Lüsterweibchen* dates from 1392, commissioned for the church of the Virgin in Lemgo, moved during the Reformation to the city's town hall, and subsequently to the museum in Hexenbürgermeisterhaus. The original location of the object in a religious setting is rather unusual, as other surviving examples were commissioned

figürliche Geweihleuchter aus der Pfarrkirche St. Marien," in: *700 Jahre St. Marien Lemgo*, ed. by J. Prieur-Pohl, J. Scheffler, Bielefeld 2006, pp. 144–155; D. Flüher-Kreis, P. Wyer, *Die Holzskulpturen des Mittelalters. Katalog der Sammlung des Schweizerischen Landesmuseums Zürich*, Zürich 2007, pp. 324–325; J. von Fircks, "'Lieben diener v[nd] dinerinne, pfeget mit steter trewen minne'. Das Wiesbadener Leuchterweibchen als Minneallegorie," in: *Nicht die Bibliothek, sondern das Auge. Westeuropäische Skulptur und Malerei an der Wende zur Neuzeit. Beiträge zu Ehren von Hartmut Krohm*, ed. by T. Kunz, Petersberg 2008, pp. 98–110; M.R. Mallach, *Das Meermädchen von Albrecht Dürer. Ein Blick auf das Leuchterweibchen*, MA Thesis, Technische Universität Dresden 2010; *Artefakt und Naturwunder – Das Leuchterweibchen der Sammlung Ludwig*, ed. by D. Preising, M. Rief, Ch. Vogt, exh. cat. Ludwig Galerie, Schloss Oberhausen 2011; M.R. Mallach, "Dürers Leuchterweibchen als Reflexionsbild," in: *Von der Freiheit der Bilder. Spott, Kritik und Subversion in der Kunst der Dürerzeit*, ed. Th. Schauerte, J. Müller, B. Kaschek, Petersberg 2013, pp. 74–91; L. Zenklusen, "Das Lüsterweibchen aus dem Haus Supersaxo in Sitten," *Walliser Jahrbuch* 83, 2014, pp. 68–72; D. Preising, "Geweih und Schnitzwerk. Ein Leuchtertypus und sein Bedeutungswandel vom Mittelalter zum Historismus," *Aachener Kunstblätter* 65 (2011–2013), 2014, pp. 98–115; D. Preising, M. Rief, "Neue Funde und Ergänzungen zu Geweihleuchtern," *Aachener Kunstblätter* 65 (2011–2013), 2014, pp. 116–137; A. Treptau, "Drei Geweihleuchter aus dem Bayrischen Nationalmuseum – eine kunsttechnologische Beschreibung," in: *Aachener Kunstblätter* 65 (2011–2013), 2014, pp. 138–161; D. Preising, "Geweihleuchter," in: *RDK Labor* (2015), <<http://www.rdklabor.de/w/?oldid=95495>>.

17 *Lüsterweibchen* from Tilman Riemenschneider's workshop: J. Chapuis et al., *Tilman Riemenschneider: Master Sculptor of the Late Middle Ages*, exh. cat., The National Gallery of Art, Washington – The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1999–2000, Yale University Press, New Haven–London 1999, cat. no. 41; *Tilman Riemenschneider, Werke seiner Blütezeit*, eds. C. Lichte, I. Kalden-Rosenfeld et al., exh. cat. Mainfränkisches Museum Würzburg [now Museum für Franken], Regensburg 2004, cat. no. 19 (with previous bibliography).

for town halls or different public buildings. Early, fifteenth-century examples include chandeliers from the Museum Carolino Augusteum in Salzburg (c. 1425), the Badisches Landesmuseum in Karlsruhe, the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, and the Sammlung Ludwig in Oberhausen. In 1513, Albrecht Dürer designed a *Lüsterweibchen* in a watercolour drawing (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) for his befriended patron, a patrician and a humanist from Nuremberg, Willibald Pirckheimer [fig. 70]. He wrote to him: “This is just a head linked with a tail and a branch, whilst the antlers are harmoniously integrated with the chandelier to form a crown it seems to be a product of pure fantasy.”¹⁸ In Lucas Cranach the Elder’s painting showing *Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg as Saint Jerome in his Study* (version from 1526, Sarasota, Florida, Ringling Museum of Art) [fig. 71] we can see a prominent chandelier of this type suspended from the ceiling, clearly placed here to stress the wealth and luxury of the interior. In the engraving by the Master MZ *A Couple Embracing* (L. 16), *Lüsterweibchen* [fig. 72] accompanies the courtship of the young girl and the young gentleman, highlighting the erotic undertones of the scene.



Fig. 69: Workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider, chandelier of the *Lüsterweibchen* type, c. 1515, private collection, deposited in Museum für Franken (former Mainfränkisches Museum) in Würzburg

18 *Lüsterweibchen* by Albrecht Dürer: M.R. Mallach, *Das Meermädchen von Albrecht Dürer...*; her, “Dürers Leuchterweibchen als Reflexionsbild.”



Fig. 70: Albrecht Dürer, Design for the *Lüsterweibchen* for Willibald Pirckheimer and his wife, Crescentia Reiterin, 1513, watercolour study, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



Fig. 71: Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg as Saint Jerome in his Study*, 1526, Sarasota, Florida, Ringling Museum of Art



Fig. 72: Master MZ, *A Couple Embracing*, 1503, engraving, Cracow, National Museum, Princes Czartoryski Library, private deposit

Lüsterweibchen should not be confused with the images of Melusine, even though the latter figure originates from the same realm of collective imagination. The woman was depicted mostly in manuscript illuminations and book prints, and not in the three-dimensional form of the chandelier [fig. 73]. According to a folk story, compiled between 1387–1393 by Jean d'Arras at the court of Jean de Berry, Melusine was a sorceress, who after she got married, forced her husband to take an oath that he would never try to see her on Saturdays. The man did not keep his promise and peeked into the bathing room on Saturday, whilst Melusine was taking her weekly bath. He discovered that the lower body of his wife was a giant serpent. The revelation doomed the family of the husband, which began to be entangled in bloody feuds and conflicts, for which he blamed his wife. Desperate, Melusine jumped out of the window of the castle, but instead of crashing into the ground, she transformed into a winged serpent and flew away. The story was linked to the origins of the House of Lusignan, to reinforce the legend about the unsurpassed and supernatural power of their celebrated

members, linking Guy of Lusignan, the twelfth-century king of Jerusalem and Cyprus, to Uriens – Melusine’s son.¹⁹

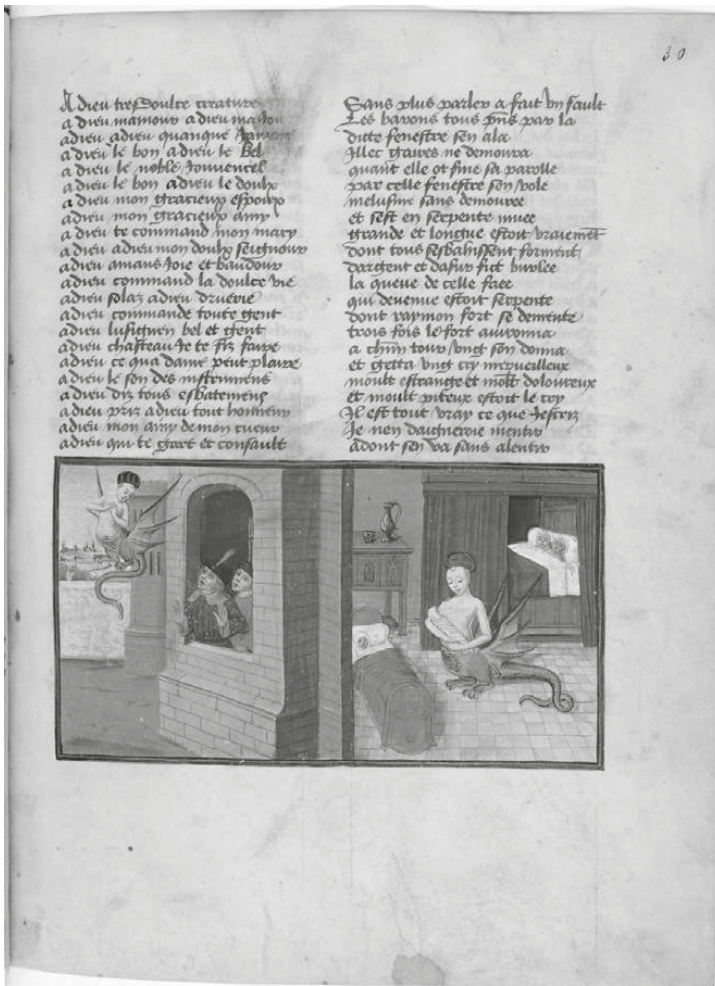


Fig. 73: French master, miniature in the *Roman de Mélusine* attributed to Coudrette (1401), 2nd half of the 15th century, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms français 24383, fol. 30r

19 *Melusine*: Jean d'Arras, *Mélusine ou La noble histoire de Lusignan*, *Roman du XIV^e siècle*, (critical edition of the manuscript from Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal in Paris, with accordance with other manuscripts), trans. and ed. by J.-J. Vincensini, Paris 2003; *Die schöne Melusina. Ein Feenroman des 15. Jahrhunderts in der deutschen Übertragung des Thüring von Ringoltingen*, critical edition H. Stein-Kecks, Darmstadt 2012; C. Steinkämper, *Melusine – vom Schlangenweib zur 'Beauté mit*

Another *Lüsterweibchen* chandelier is preserved in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum. It is a work of two artistic giants from its time: Albrecht Dürer and Veit Stoss [figs. 74–75]. The chandelier in the shape of a three-headed dragon embedded into a reindeer's antlers (*Drachenleuchter*) and was commissioned by Anton II Tucher in 1522 for the Regimental Chamber (Regimentstube) in the Town Hall in Nuremberg (today Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum).²⁰ Dürer's drawing design for the object is preserved at the Städtische Wessenberg-Galerie in Konstanz. It was carved by Stoss in limewood and gilded to imitate bronze. The collaboration between the two masters seems confirmed by the handwritten inscription on the drawing. However, some scholars reject this attribution as added at a later stage, perhaps by a collector who wished to ascribe the chandelier to the two famous Renaissance artists. Dürer was an avid collector of all curiosities and acquired antlers of different animals. Stoss captured his interest in wildlife and unfamiliar forms in wood. He instilled the body of the dragon with great flexibility and a sense of movement, enhanced by the gilding that would have been illuminated by the flickering light of candles placed in the three heads of the monster.

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- dem Fischeschwanz*'. *Geschichte einer literarischen Aneignung*, Göttingen 2007 (with previous bibliography). See also K. Heisig, "Über den Ursprung der Melusinesage," *Fabula* 3, 1960, pp. 170–181; J.-D. Müller, "Melusine in Bern. Zum Problem der 'Verbürgerlichung' höfischer Epik im 15. Jahrhundert," in: *Literatur, Publikum, historischer Kontext*, ed. G. Kaiser, 1977, pp. 27–77; C. Lecouteux, "La structure des légendes Mélusiniennes," *Annales E.S.C* 33, 1978, pp. 294–306; M. Backes, "'...von dem nabel hinauff ein menschlich vnd hübsch weyblichs bilde / vnd von dem nabel hin ab ein grosser langer wurm'. Zur Illustrierung deutscher Melusinen-Handschriften des 15. Jahrhundert," *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* N.F. 37, 1996, pp. 67–88; *Melusine of Lusignan: Founding Fiction in Late Medieval France*, ed. by D. Maddox, S. Sturm-Maddox, Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1996; J. Le Goff, *Un autre Moyen Âge*, Paris 1999; *Die unheimliche Wirkung der Wasserfrauen*, ed. by L. Jordan, B. Gribnitz, J.A. Kruse, exh. cat. *Lorelei, Undine, Melusine und andere Wassergeister*, Kleist-Museum, Frankfurt a.d.O. 2007; C. Steinkämper, *Melusine – vom Schlangenweib zur 'Beaute mit dem Fischeschwanz'*: *Geschichte einer literarischen Aneignung*, Göttingen 2007; M. White-Le Goff, *Envoûtante Mélusine*, (Les grandes figures du Moyen Âge, 1), Paris 2008; N. Bock, "Feen, Frauen und missgestaltete Söhne. Das Interesse am Körper in der Kunst um 1500 am Beispiel der Melusine," in: *Menschenbilder. Beiträge zur altdeutschen Kunst*, ed. by A. Tacke, S. Heinz, I.-S. Hoffmann, Ch. Metzger, Petersberg 2011, pp. 135–158; *Melusine's Footprint: Tracing the Legacy of a Medieval Myth*, ed. by M. Urban, D. F. Kemmis, M. Ridley Elmes, (Brill Explorations in Medieval Culture, 4), Leiden 2017; A. Montandon, *Mélusine et Barbe-Bleue. Essai de sociopoétique*, Paris 2018.
- 20 Albrecht Dürer and Veit Stoss (?), *Drachenleuchter* of Anton Tucher: H. Stafski, "Der Drachenleuchter für Anton Tucher. Ein angezweifelt Werk des Veit Stoß," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 49, 1986, pp. 125–146; Albrecht Dürer: *His Art in Context*, ed. J. Sander, exh. cat., Städel Museum, Frankfurt a.M., Munich–London–New York 2013, cat. no. 11.10 (with previous literature).



Fig. 74: Albrecht Dürer, Design for the *Drachenleuchter* for the Regimental Chamber (Regimentstube) of the town hall in Nuremberg, c. 1520–1522, drawing, Constance, Städtische Wessenberg-Galerie



Fig. 75: Albrecht Dürer and Veit Stoss, *Drachenleuchter* for the Regimental Chamber (Regimentstube) of the town hall in Nuremberg, 1522, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 76: Master HW (Hans Witten?), *Großer Kaiserleuchter*, large chandelier with a figure of the emperor, c. 1500, Goslar, Town Hall

In the representative entry hall (*Diele*) of the town hall in Goslar two fifteenth-century chandeliers are suspended from the ceiling. Referred to as *Kleiner* and *Großer Kaiserleuchter*, from c. 1490 and 1500 respectively, they show figures of the emperor seated on the throne placed between the reindeer's antlers [fig. 76].²¹ The form is similar to that of *Lüsterweibchen*, but the meaning of the work becomes more serious: the emperor symbolizes the direct submission of the city to his power and thus its status as a free city of the Holy Roman Empire, received from Charles IV in 1349 (according to a written account, the large chandelier was created from the antlers of a reindeer shot in that year.) This political meaning of the work is explicitly conveyed by the inscriptions

21 *Kaiserleuchter in town hall in Goslar*: F. Stuttmann, G. von der Osten, *Niedersächsische Bildschnitzerei des späten Mittelalters*, Berlin 1940, p. 15; *Stadt im Wandel. Kunst und Kultur des Bürgertums in Norddeutschland 1150–1650. Landesausstellung Niedersachsen 1985*, ed. C. Meckseper et al., exh. cat., Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum (Vieweghaus)–Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum (Burg Dankwarderode)–Dom Braunschweig, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1985, vol. 1, cat. no. 80.

on the figure of the “Small Emperor,” which transcribe the text of the oath: “o gosler du bist/ togeda(n)dem hilge(n)/ romeske(n) rik/ esunder middel / und wae(n) nicht macstu dar/van wike(n)” – “Goslar, thou art the subject of the Holy Roman Empire, directly and with dignity; you may never resign from this.” In the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, city gates displayed similar figures of the enthroned emperor.

All the examples discussed above demonstrate a play with objects placed in a space in which an animated mode of viewing may be stimulated. The anti-static, multi-angle and multi-directional view led beholders to look through the airy structures of Crucifixion groups or Crucifixes placed on rood screens which stood between the main nave, accessible to the lay congregation, and the choir reserved for the clergy. This spatial arrangement can be observed, for instance, in the Church of Our Lady in Cracow, with its crucifix which was carved in a workshop of a follower of Veit Stoss c. 1490–1500 [fig. 77].²²



Fig. 77: Workshop active in Cracow after Veit Stoss, Crucifix on the rood beam in the Church of Our Lady in Cracow, c. 1500–1512

22 W. Walanus, *Późnogotycka rzeźba drewniana w Małopolsce 1490–1540*, Cracow 2006, chapter 4.4.



Fig. 78: Bernt Notke and his workshop, *Crucifixion with Bishop Albrecht Krummedick*, 1472–1477, choir screen in the background, 1477, Lübeck Cathedral

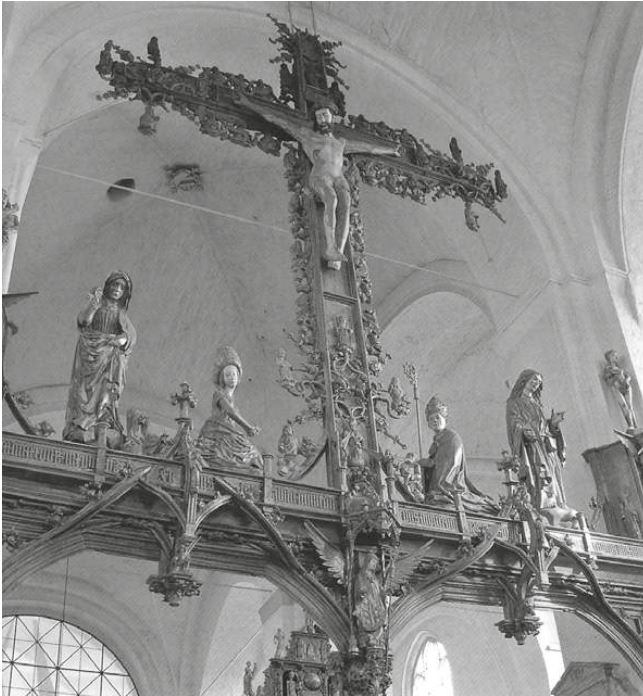


Fig. 79: Bernt Notke and his workshop, *Crucifixion with Bishop Albrecht Krummedick* in Lübeck Cathedral – view from below

In 1472 Bernt Notke and his workshop began carving a monumental group of the Crucified Christ with the Virgin and John the Evangelist, accompanied by the kneeling Mary Magdalene and the Bishop of Lübeck, Albrecht Krummedick. Blessed in 1477 in the Lübeck Cathedral, the group sits on the rood screen, located before the crossing, and not after it, before the first bay of the choir [figs. 78–79].²³ The rood screen forms a horizontal element of

23 **Bernt Notke, the Triumphal Crucifixion group in the Cathedral in Lübeck:** *Internationales Kolloquium zum Werk des Bernt Notke, anlässlich der Restaurierung der Triumphkreuzgruppe im Dom Lübeck*, 22–24. September 1976, ed. G. Taubert, Munich 1977; K. Stoll, E.M. Vetter, E. Oellermann, *Triumphkreuz im Dom zu Lübeck. Ein Meisterwerk Bernt Notkes*, Wiesbaden 1979; M.J. Liebmann, *Die deutsche Plastik 1350–1550*, pp. 248–254; G. Eimer, *Bernt Notke. Das Wirken eines niederdeutschen Künstlers im Ostseeraum*, Bonn 1985; G. Eimer, “Hoc magnum opus. Zur Entstehung von Bernt Notkes Monumentalwerken,” in: *Imagines Medievales. Festschrift Carl Otto Nordström*, Uppsala 1983, pp. 77–97; A. von Ulmann, “‘...dem Original getreu nachgebildet...’. Zu den liturgischen Gewändern am Triumphkreuz von Bernt Notke, 1477,” in: *Unter der Lupe. Neue Forschungen zu Skulptur und Malerei des Hoch- und Spätmittelalters. Festschrift für Hans Westhoff zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by A. Moraht-Fromm, H. Westhoff, Stuttgart 2000, pp. 147 ff.; K. Petermann, *Bernt Notke. Arbeitsweise und Werkstattorganisation im späten Mittelalter*, Berlin 2000, pp. 45–55; E. Oellermann, “‘Do makede meister bernd notken dit stvke werkes...,’” in: *Malerei und Skulptur des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit in Norddeutschland. Künstlerischer Austausch im Kulturraum zwischen Nordsee und Baltikum*, (Beiträgen zum Kolloquium *Entstehung und Frühgeschichte des Flügelaltarschreins*, Hildesheim 1996), ed. by H. Krohm, U. Albrecht, M. Weniger, Berlin–Wiesbaden 2004, pp. 233–247; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 150–151 and 219–220; *Bernt Notke: Das Triumphkreuz im Dom zu Lübeck*, ed. by H. Vogeler, U. Albrecht, H. Freitag, Kiel 2010; J.E. Jung, *The Gothic Screen: Space, Sculpture, and Community in the Cathedrals of France and Germany, ca. 1200–1400*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012, pp. 48–50; *Corpus der mittelalterlichen Holzskulptur und Tafelmalerei in Schleswig-Holstein*, vol. II, ed. by U. Albrecht, contributions by U. Albrecht, U. Nürnberger, J.F. Richter, Ch. Saumweber, Kiel 2013, no. 17; A. von Ulmann, “Das Repertoire der Fremdmaterialien in Notkes Werkstatt,” in: *Art, Cult and Patronage. Die visuelle Kultur im Ostseeraum zur Zeit Bernt Notkes*, ed. by A. Mänd, U. Albrecht, Kiel 2013, pp. 208–215; *Lübeck 1500. Kunstmetropole im Ostseeraum*, ed. by J.F. Richter, exh. cat., St. Annenmuseum, Lübeck 2015–2016, Petersberg 2015, cat. no. 3; J.F. Richter, *Das Triumphkreuz im Dom zu Lübeck Dokumentation einer Restaurierung*, Berlin 2019. **Bernt Notke, general surveys:** W. Paatz, *Bernt Notke und sein Kreis*, Berlin 1939; M. Hasse, *Bernt Notke*, “Zeitschrift für Kunstwissenschaft” 24, 1970, pp. 19–60; E. Moltke, *Bernt Notkes Altertafle i Århus Domkirke og Tallinntaflen*, 2 vols, Copenhagen 1970; *Internationales Kolloquium zum Werk des Bernt Notke*,

the construction, which resembles a choir screen (*Lettner*, though the main choir screen is placed in the following bay, behind the transept, and before the presbytery – also carved by Notke’s workshop). The entire multiplane, gigantic structure (the figure of Christ measures 3.38m in height) creates a sculpted and architectural division between the transept and the choir. It can be viewed both frontally and from the back, if seen from the bay of the transept. This movement towards the actual choir screen and towards the altar is implied in the composition and form of the group: the heads of the figures are tilted downwards, in order to be visible by the viewer approaching and walking underneath the suspended sculptures. The pose of the crucified Christ’s does not diverge from typical representations: His body hangs on the cross, His head falls to the chest. However, the attending figures are carefully staged to establish a direct connection with the viewers below. The sculptures seem to direct the gaze of the faithful to the crucified Christ but also – perhaps most importantly – to the figure of the bishop-donor and to the inscription commemorating the commission: “An[n]o d[omi]ni m cccc lxxvii R[everen]d[us] in Christo pater Et d[omi]n[u]s d[omi]n[u]s albert[us] crum[m]edik E[pisco]pus lubice[n]s[is] hoc magnu[m] opus ad laude[m] dei p[ro]p[ri]is suis su[m]ptib[us] fieri fecit.” The Latin text is placed on the front of the rood, whilst on the back there follows a translation in lower German: “Anno domini m cccc lxxvij up krutwiginghe hefft herr albert krummedik eyn bisschop to lubeke dit werk to dem lave gades van sinem ehrliken gude bereden laten.” Thus, a viewer unable to read Latin could comprehend the inscription only after

anlässlich der Restaurierung der Triumphkreuzgruppe im Dom Lübeck, 22–24. September 1976, ed. by G. Taubert, Munich 1977; M.J. Liebmann, *Die deutsche Plastik 1350–1550*, pp. 246–284; G. Eimer, “Hoc magnum opus. Zur Entstehung von Bernt Notkes Monumentalwerken,” in: *Imagines Medievales. Festschrift Carl Otto Nordström*, Uppsala 1983, pp. 77–97; G. Eimer, *Bernt Notke. Das Wirken eines niederdeutschen Künstlers im Ostseeraum*, Bonn 1985; K. Petermann, *Bernt Notke. Arbeitsweise und Werkstattorganisation im späten Mittelalter*, Berlin 2000; E. Oellermann, “‘Do makede meister bernd notken dit stvke werkes...,’” in: *Malerei und Skulptur des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit in Norddeutschland*, pp. 233–247; K. Petermann, “Überlegungen zu den niederländischen Verbindungen der Werkstatt Bernt Notkes,” in: *Malerei und Skulptur...*, pp. 249–255; *Bernt Notke: uenduste ja traditsioonide vabel / Bernt Notke: Between Innovation and Tradition*, ed. by A. Mänd, exh. cat., Niguliste Muuseumis, Tallinn 2009–2010; *Art, Cult and Patronage: Die visuelle Kultur im Ostseeraum zur Zeit Bernt Notkes*, ed. by A. Mänd, U. Albrecht, Kiel 2013; M. Weniger, “Bernt Notke. Enigma trotz Erfolg,” in: *Lübeck 1500. Kunstmetropole im Ostseeraum*, ed. by J.F. Richter, exh. cat., St. Annenmuseum, Lübeck 2015–2016, Petersberg 2015, pp. 81–90.

walking under the sculptural group, turning back and looking upwards to see: “In the year of our Lord 1477, in the day of the Assumption of the Virgin, Albrecht Krummedick, the Bishop of Lübeck, had this work done at his own expense for the glory of God.” The faithful could understand the origin and function of the work, which was not merely a crucifix or a Crucifixion grouping, typically placed on the rood screen, but a quasi-sepulchral image of the donor in a pious act, commemorated through the portrait and the coat-of-arms held by an angel in a console at the base of the cross. The gazes of the tilted heads directed also the eyes of the viewers to the ground, towards the tomb of the bishop under the floor, directly below the cross – to the tombstone underneath which the bishop was buried in 1489.

II.2. Giants, colossuses, monuments

Giants and colossuses have been present in art since the beginning. The Colossus of Rhodes, the monumental figures of Olympian Zeus and Athena Parthenos by Phidias, the gigantic statue of Athena Promachos on the Acropolis, the twenty-four meter high figure of Zeus in Tarentum by Lysippus, the *Colossus Neronis* – the gigantic monument of Nero towering above the Domus Aurea in Rome, or the twelve meter high statue of Constantine the Great, of which only the large head survives now in the Musei Capitolini – these antique monuments, known from the texts of ancient writers or surviving fragments, nourished the medieval imagination [fig. 80]. The Dioscuri – statues on the Monte Cavallo, or the Quirinal Hill, were also considered colossuses in the Middle Ages (the second pair of statues – at the Capitoline Hill – was only discovered in c. 1560).²⁴ In 1204, Venetian boats were supposed to have brought from Constantinople to Italy a bronze statue of an emperor, three times larger than the life-size – 5.11m – the so-called *Colossus of Barletta*, named after the city in which the monument was placed [fig. 81].²⁵ However, this

24 F. Haskell, N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900*, New Haven 1981, p. 136, cat. no. 3.

25 É. Demougeot, “Le Colosse de Barletta,” in: *Mélanges de l’école française de Rome*, 94, 1982, pp. 951–978; G. Purpura, “Il ‘Colosso’ di Barletta ed il Codice di Teodosio II,” in: *Atti del IX Convegno Internazionale dell’Accademia Costantiniana di Perugia*, 2–6 ottobre 1989, Perugia 1993, pp. 457–480 (reprinted from: *Archeologia Viva*, febbraio 1991, pp. 48–55); K. Hornig, “Der Koloss von Barletta. Odyssee einer konstantinischen Statue,” *Skyllis* 8, 1/2, 2007/2008, pp. 100–123; B. Killerich, “The Barletta Colossus Revisited: The Methodological Challenges of an Enigmatic Statue,” *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 28, 2015, pp. 55–72.

is only a legend, and the figure actually came from Ravenna. The identity of the emperor is still debated: it is unlikely that the ruler depicted is Heraclius (reigned 610–641), as put forward by the oral tradition, but it might have been Theodosius II (408–450), who may have asked to have the monument erected in Ravenna, or Valentinian (364–375), Honorius (393–423), Marcian (450–457) or Justinian the Great (527–565). In reality, the statue was discovered in 1231–1232 during the excavations in Ravenna, organised by the Emperor Friedrich II Hohenstaufen, and subsequently transported to Puglia in southern Italy, where it was placed in a city square in Barletta. In 1309, the legs and shoulders of the figure were broken off and melted down for the Dominican church bells; in the fifteenth century the missing parts were reconstructed and reattached to the statue.



Fig. 80: Head of the twelve metre high statue of Constantine the Great, Rome, Musei Capitolini



Fig. 81: *Colossus of Barletta* at the Basilica del Santo Sepolcro, Barletta

Contrary to common belief, over the course of the Middle Ages artists continued to explore the monumental ancient scale and construct giant sculptures and images. Large-scale figures of Old Testament kings and patriarchs, measuring 3.5–5 meters in height, decorate the façades of

French cathedrals within the so-called royal galleries (Notre-Dame in Paris, Reims, Amiens and others) [fig. 82]. Between 1370 and 1380 an eight-meter-high figure of the Virgin and Christ Child was erected on the exterior of the church of the Castle in Marienburg/Malbork. The sculpture, created from terrazzo, was originally painted with polychromy, substituted later for mosaics [fig. 83].²⁶ The colossal figure of St. Swithun dated c. 1410, now in the crypt of Winchester Cathedral, was probably originally located on the façade.²⁷

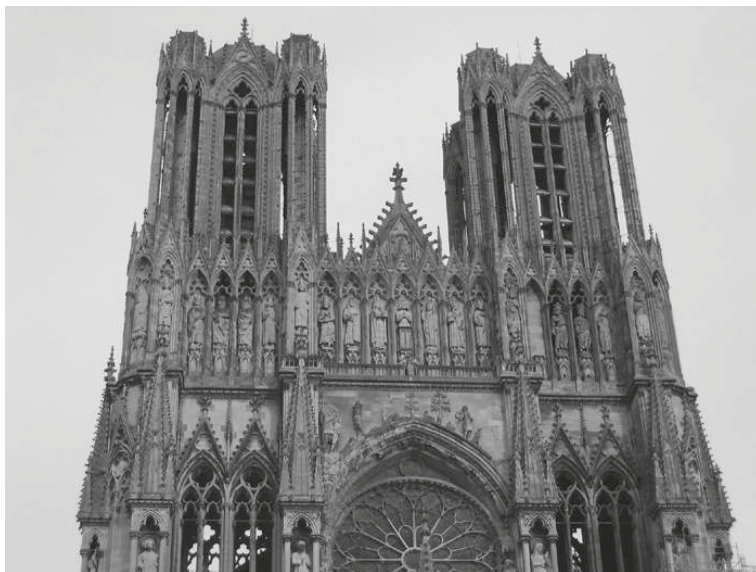


Fig. 82: Royal Gallery on the façade of Reims Cathedral, first half of the 14th century

26 **Colossal figure of the Virgin Mary in Marienburg/Malbork:** Precise measurements of the statue were carried out in 2014 based on the preserved head of the figure (1.17 m). The results were used to determine that the original statue had a total height of 7.93 m. T. Jurkowlaniec, *Gotycka rzeźba architektoniczna w Prusach*, Wrocław 1989; M. Kilariski, *Mozaikowa figura Malborskiej Madonny. Fakty, legendy, interpretacje*, Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku, Malbork 1993; A. Grzybkowski, “Die Genese des Kolosses von Marienburg,” *Arte medievale* 10, 1996, no. 2, pp. 133–143; *Monumentalna figura Madonny na kościele NMP w Malborku. Konteksty historyczne, artystyczne i konserwatorskie*, ed. by J. Hochleitner, Malbork 2015; *Kościół Najświętszej Marii Panny na Zamku Wysokim w Malborku. Dzieje – wystrój – konserwacja*, ed. by J. Hochleitner, M. Mierzwiński, Malbork 2016; J. Hochleitner, “Restoration of the monumental sculpture of Madonna in the Castle of the Teutonic Order In Malbork (Marienburg),” *Echa Przeszłości XVIII*, 2017, pp. 117–127.

27 A. Gardner, *English Medieval Sculpture*, Cambridge University Press 2011, p. 228, fig. 446.



Fig. 83: Virgin and Christ Child statue, on the exterior of the church of the Castle in Marienburg / Malbork, c. 1370–1380, reconstruction (2016) and an archival photo (before 1945)



Fig. 84: Carnival processions with colossal figures, Wetteren, postcard from the 1920s

The medieval imagination was filled with giants.²⁸ They are common in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament (including Nephilim in Genesis, as well as the Anakim, Emites, Og of Bashan, and Gogmagog). The giants of the fifteenth century were Goliath, Samson, St. Christopher, Roland, the Cynocephali, and the opponents of King Arthur in the Celtic legends. The portals to various cathedrals, such as the Riesentor (Giant's Gate) of St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, documented as being in situ from 1443, or the Wawel's Cathedral in Cracow, are decorated to this day with gigantic bones – the rib cages of mammoths, believed to be the true remains of giants. Goliath featured in colossal sculptures and images, such as the decoration of the façade of Reims Cathedral, and was included in the carnival processions and the pageantry, organised there from at least the end of the thirteenth century, with figures of St. Christopher, Hercules, Samson and the sons of Haimon [fig. 84]. These processions (Netherlandish *ommegange*) were and continue to be organised in Antwerp, Dendermonde, Mechelen, Brussels, Mons Douai, Ath, Cassel and Tarascon. In the region of Nord/Pas-de-Calais, images of giants from the local legends are carried in annual processions. For instance, in Cassel the mannequins of the two giants Reuze-Papa and Reuze-Maman (*reuze* in Netherlandish means a giant), considered the founders of the city since they filled a ravine with earth (thus creating a famous hill, Mont de Cassel), are carried to the present day. In turn, Cambrai has Martin and Martine – male and female giants shown as Moors in turbans, wearing armour, banging with hammers against a bell as a symbol of the hour of death; the folk tradition says that the giants hit their enemies' helmets with the hammers, so that they covered their eyes and thus prevented them from winning the battle. In a procession in Dunkirk from the end of the Middle Ages numerous male and female giants take part: Reuze Papa, Reuze Allowyn, Dagobert, Gélon, Goliath, Roland and Samson, as well as Dame Gentille (Reuze Papa's wife), Pietje, Mietje, Boutje and Meisje. In Lille, the city's founders are carried around (named Lydéric and Phynaert), and in Douai, accompanied by other mannequins, the 7.5-meter-high Gayant. A giant Roland, identified with Count Baudouin from Flanders, parades in Hazebrouck. Pageantry giants are common to many cities and towns in the region, including: Aniche, Ardres, Armentières, Arras, Bailleul, Bapaume, Bergues, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bourbourg, Bruay, Calais, Coudekerque, Denain, Etaires, Grand-Fort-Philippe, Grande-Synthe, Gravelines, Hesdin, Lome, Le Quesnay, Saint-Omer, Soman, Steenvoorde, Valenciennes and Villeers-Outréau. Though in the majority of these places the tradition of making and displaying mannequins of giants is

28 Alixe Bovey from the Courtauld Institute, London, is currently writing a book entitled: *Giants and the City: Mythic History as Material Culture in London from the Middle Ages to 21st Century*.

documented after the first half of the sixteenth century (Douai), and mostly between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, undoubtedly this tradition goes back to medieval times.



Fig. 85: Albrecht von Nürnberg?, *St. Christopher* on Christoffelturm, Bern, 1496–1498, view from an archival postcard, the original upper section preserved in the Historisches Museum in Bern



Fig. 86: Sculptor from Nuremberg, *St. Christopher*, from the portal to the southern tower of St. Sebaldus' church in Nuremberg, 1442, Nuremberg, original in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum and the copy on the exterior of the church



Fig. 87: Tilman van der Burch, *St. Christopher*, c. 1470, Cologne Cathedral



Fig. 88: *St. Christopher*, fresco in the Our Lady Church at Gunzenhausen (Bavaria), 1498



Fig. 89: *St. Christopher*, woodcut from the illustrated edition of the *Golden Legend*, 1423, Latin MS 366 from Buxheim (Upper Rhine), Manchester, The University of Manchester Library, John Rylands Library, Blockbook 17249.2



Fig. 90: Albrecht Dürer, *St. Christopher*, 1511, woodcut, New York, Metropolitan Museum, Gift of Junius Spencer Morgan, 1919 (19.73.162)

Giants also had a long tradition in Germany. According to folk legends, giants lived in the Schwarzwald forest in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, and the last German giant who came out of the Odenwal was killed by the Emperor Maximilian I himself in Worms. St. Christopher – the Christian model of a knight and wanderer – stood as a guardian by the entrances and gates to the cities, in a similar fashion to the wooden colossal sculpture (1496–1498) on Christoffelturm in Swiss Bern, attributed to Albrecht von Nuremberg. The statue measured 9.90m originally (the top part is now preserved in the local Historisches Museum) [fig. 85].²⁹ In 1534 after the triumph of the Reformation, the figure of the Christ Child was cut away from St. Christopher in an act of iconoclasm. A sword and a halberd were added instead to transform the colossus into the biblical Goliath, considered at that time a historical figure, unlike the legendary St. Christopher. Monumental figures of St. Christopher, sculpted or painted in frescoes, filled churches and their surroundings across Europe, from Italy and Tirol through Austria and Germany, to the Netherlands and Scandinavia. Measuring 3.35 m in height, the figure from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, commissioned in 1442 by Heinrich Schlüsselfelder, initially stood by the portal to the southern tower of St. Sebaldus' church in Nuremberg [fig. 86].³⁰ To look at the figure – as on any other image of St. Christopher – and prayer directed to him guarded the faithful from a sudden death when one was not in a state of grace. For this reason, St. Christopher belonged to the group of Fourteen Holy Helpers, and functioned as one of the most popular saintly intercessors.

The *Golden Legend* describes the saint as a giant with a massive body, measuring twelve arms in height, and an out-of-shape head, which resembled a dog's head (hence a motif in other legends, which identified him as a cynocephalus from distant lands). He was ugly, and according to one eastern legend his name was Reprobis, Repulsive. He had supernatural strength and wandered around the world in search of a man who was stronger than him and the most mighty in the entire world. Failing to find such a man, he encountered a hermit who told him that only God could be this mighty ruler and that he should await the moment when God would reveal his power to him. One day Christopher substituted in for a certain carrier, and carried passengers on his shoulders across the river, including a child who

29 *St. Christopher on Christoffelturm in Bern*: F. Bächtiger, "Zur Revision des Berner Christoffel," *Jahrbuch des Bernischen Historischen Museums* 59/60, 1979/1980, pp. 115–278; Ch. Pfister, *Die Ursprünge Berns*, Bern 2013, passim.

30 R. Kahsnitz, "Sculpture in Stone, Terracotta, and Wood," in: *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg, 1300–1550*, exh. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York – Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 1986, pp. 61–74, on pp. 68–69.

at first seemed very light and then suddenly became a great burden. He said to the child: 'My child you are so heavy, that it feels as if I were carrying the entire world on my shoulders.' The child responded: 'You spoke truly, I am Jesus, the Saviour, who carries the burden of the entire world.' When they finally crossed the river, the child said: 'You carried Christ on your shoulders; from now on your name will be Christophorus.' The legend has it that Jesus gave a normal appearance back to Christopher, and from that time on the saint venerated Christ and preached in his name.³¹

Apart from monumental figures of Christopher, such as that from the Cathedral in Cologne, carved c. 1470 by Tilman van der Burch, or multi-story frescoes of him, such as those from 1498 in the Marian Church at Gunzenhausen (Bavaria), the image of the saint frequently also functioned on a small scale, in prints; the earliest woodcut with his image dates from 1423, from the illustrated edition of the *Golden Legend*, as well as in various prints by Dürer [figs. 87–90].

To the category of medieval giants belongs also figures from tales *The Song of Roland*, displayed on city squares in front of a townhall or a town church [figs. 91–94].³² They measured several meters in height, typically 4–5 meters. They were erected in the cities of northern Germany, particularly in the regions of Mecklenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Brandenburg and Saxony, and in northern Austria, Bohemia, Silesia, Dalmatia and northern Italy and France. From, over two hundred original monuments, recorded in documents and historical accounts, twenty-five have survived, including early figures of Roland in Halberstadt (1381), Zerbst (1385), Brandenburg (1402), Bremen (1404), Nordhaus (1411), Ragusa/ Dubrovnik (1419), Haldensleben

31 M. Schneider, *Die Christophorus-Legende in Ost und West. Das Leben aus dem Glauben und seine bildhafte Darstellung in der frühchristlichen und abendländischen Tradition*, Cologne 2005.

32 **Figures of Roland in Europe:** A.D. Gathen, *Rolande als Rechtssymbole. Der archäologische Bestand und seine rechtshistorische Deutung*, (Neue Kölner Rechtswissenschaftlichen Abhandlungen 14), Berlin 1960; I. Mitic, "Die Rolandssäule in Ragusa (Dubrovnik)," *ZRG (GA)* 82, 1965, pp. 306–316; R. Lejeune, J. Stiennon, *La légende de Roland dans l'art du moyen âge*, 2 vols., Brussels 1966–1968; W. Trusen, "Der 'Heilige' Roland und das Kaiserrecht," in: *Festschrift für Nikolaus Grass*, ed. K. Ebert, Innsbruck 1986; D. Pötschke, "Rolande als Problem der Stadtgeschichtsforschung," *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 37, 1988; H. Rempel, *Die Rolandstatuen, Herkunft und geschichtliche Wandlung*, Darmstadt 1989; W. Grape, *Roland. Die ältesten Standbilder als Wegbereiter der Neuzeit*, Hürtgenwald 1991; N. Popov, *Das magische Dreieck. Rolandfiguren in europäischen Raum. Bremen–Riga–Dubrovnik*, Oschersleben 1993; H. Lück, "Der Roland und das Burggrafengericht zu Halle," in: *Europa in der Frühen Neuzeit, Festschrift für Günter Mühlhpfordt*, ed. E. Donnert, vol. 1 1997, pp. 61–81; D. Munzel-Everling, *Kaiserrecht und Rolandfiguren. Ein weiterer Beitrag zur Rolandforschung*, in: *www. forum historiae iuris* 1997; D. Pötschke, "Ursprung und rechtliche

(1419), Halle (1426), Quedlinburg (1426) and Prenzlau (1496). Their connection with the name of the famous palatine of Charlemagne, the governor of the Breton March (Hroutland) and with French chansons de geste, is merely circumstantial. These figures were probably related to the cult of Charlemagne, promoted by the Emperor Charles IV of Luxemburg, establishing the abovementioned cities as centres under the emperor's protection.



Fig. 91: Roland, Bremen, 1404, with subsequent alterations



Fig. 92: Roland, Halberstadt, original wooden statue dated 1381, present statue dated 1433



Fig. 93: Roland, Brandenburg, original statue 1402, present statue dated 1474

Bedeutung, insbesondere der märkischen Rolandstandbilder,” in: *www. forum historiae iuris* 1999; *Rolande, Kaiser und Recht. Zur Rechtsgeschichte des Harzraumes und seiner Umgebung*, ed. D. Pötschke, Berlin 1999; *Stadtrecht, Roland und Pranger. Beiträge zur Rechtsgeschichte von Halberstadt, Goslar, Bremen und Städten der Mark Brandenburg*, ed. D. Pötschke, Berlin 2002; H.-J. Paskarbeit, K. Feldkirch, *600 Jahre Bremer Roland (1404–2004)*, Bremen 2004; R. and R. Rusing, *Rolande in Deutschland*, Rostock 2004; D. Munzel-Everling, *Rolande. Die europäischen Rolanddarstellungen und Rolandfiguren*, Dössel 2005; *Rolands europäische Wege. Europski dom Dubrovnik*, ed. A. Kremenjaš-Daničić, Dubrovnik 2006; *Vryheit do ik ju openbar... Rolande und Stadtgeschichte*, ed. D. Pötschke, Berlin 2007; B. Feicke, “Der Roland von Quedlinburg. Symbol königlicher Privilegien für die Kaufleute der Stadt – Antipode zur Stadtherrschaft der Äbtissin des Reichsstiftes,” *Harz-Zeitschrift* 63, 2011, pp. 125–138; A. Lojek, K. Adamová, “About Statues of Rolands in Bohemia,” *Journal on European History of Law* 3, 2012, no. 1, pp. 136–138.



Fig. 94: Antonio (Antun) da Ragusa and Bonnino da Milano, *Roland (Orlando)*, Ragusa (Dubrovnik), 1423

On the other hand, they also symbolised the city's autonomy as governed by Carolingian law, renewed by the new emperor. Roland was a guardian of this legal autonomy and the protector of the city. The colossus in Bremen, displayed in front of the cathedral, was a visible sign of independence from the bishop's laws. Roland symbolised the internal city jurisdiction, which is why he often served as a pillory, although it was not his original function.

In German countries legislation was an imperial privilege. The emperor was *origo iuris* and *legum conditor*; University jurists proclaimed him as the embodiment of *lex animate in terris*, chosen by God, the maker of *lex divina*. The emperor's law (*Kaiserrecht*) gained sanctity and superiority over the Church law. According to the Carolingian legend, God offered Charlemagne the Durendart sword – the symbol of power, including

legislative – which he passed to Roland. Statues of Roland holding a giant sword informed by this tradition reminded the inhabitants of the various cities that legal privileges were passed from the emperor to individual communities. This was particularly important in northern Germany and Brandenburg, with a few free cities (Lübeck, Bremen, Duisburg, Kempten, Aachen, Cologne), making strong claims to that status. In these regions, statues of Roland and Charlemagne were most common. At times, for instance in Wesel, the statue of Roland was treated as a personification of Charlemagne; in Herford the city court conducted its hearings in the town hall loggia (*Laube*) by the monument of Charlemagne, also called Roland. The over-life size figure of the Emperor acted as the protector of the city in Roland's place (Osnabrück, Ingelheim, Frankfurt); it is notable that in the cities with statues of Charlemagne, there was no need to erect figures of the palatine, and vice versa. The established imperial law in the March of Brandenburg was to warrant Charles IV of Luxemburg and his successors control of the territories, briefly included under its direct influence (the wedding of his daughter Catherine with Otto V of Brandenburg in 1366; exclusion of the March from Wittelsbach's rule in 1373). This was documented through stone figures of Roland created in Berlin (1397) and Brandenburg (1402) and subsequently in Stendal and Prenzlau, symbolising the unity of the March's cities with the Empire, and their independence from local rulers. Similarly, the statue of Roland (Orland) in Ragusa, Dalmatia (Dubrovnik) had a political undertone linked to Luxemburg's emperors. The present statue dates from 1423, but it replaced an earlier figure. In 1396, the German king Sigismund, the son of Charles IV stayed in the city and solemnly took over its protection (for a price of 2000 ducats). This event was commemorated by the figure of Roland being placed in the city's main square, thus symbolising its independence from its previous sovereign – the Venetian Republic.

The statues of Roland, freestanding in the square, or more frequently, placed by the wall of a building located within that square, were looked at by spectators: passers-by, people in motion. The specific arrangement of the figures forced that mobile onlooker to stop in front of the statue. Always turned to the same side, they displayed the symbolic sword and other attributes of knighthood, and their faces were slightly flattened, as if treated in relief, though the figure was carved in the round. This motivated the viewer to experience the statue frontally, face to face. She or he was not to walk around and view it from the side or at an angle, but to face the figure from the spot indicated. Only then was the political message conveyed by these figures clearly communicated. In the busy world of hustle and bustle

that filled the space of the city square, these sculptures arrested the viewers' gaze for a while, drawing the attention of the crowd gathered at the public spectacles constituted by the court rulings. As symbolic pillars of a city's stability, they established the moment when lively public life came to a halt. Thus, statues of Roland, as the guardians and patrons of the city, entered the sphere of the public display of power and legal privileges in a similar way that other figures of giants, such as St. Christopher, Arthur, Charlemagne, or St. George had done.



Fig. 95: Bernt Notke, *St. George Fighting the Dragon*, 1489, Stockholm Cathedral

The same function – that of constituting a monument of power and a symbol of the patronage over the city and country – was fulfilled by the giant statue of St. George fighting the dragon in Stockholm Cathedral [figs. 95–96].³³ Commissioned to celebrate the victory of the Swedes over the Danish at the Battle of Brunkeberg (1471), it acted also as a giant reliquary for the relics of St. George and two other saints, and a funerary monument of the patron, the Regent Sten Sture, who won the battle and established the independence of the Swedish monarchy. Executed by Bernt Notke, the statue was consecrated on 31st December 1489. The entire monument measures almost six meters in height (the figures themselves measure 4.2 meters, or 3.09 without the base; the equestrian figure of the saint alone measures nearly 2.38 meters).



Fig. 96: Bernt Notke, *St. George Fighting the Dragon*, Stockholm Cathedral – figures of the saint and the dragon

33 Bernt Notke's group of St. George fighting the dragon in the Stockholm Cathedral: C.G. Heise, *Bernt Notke: St. Jürgen zu Stockholm. Holzbildwerk von 1489*, Berlin 1940; D. Feldmann, "Zur Bedeutung von Notkes St. Georgs-Monument in Stockholm," *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 45, 1976, pp. 18–38; M.J. Liebmann, *Die deutsche Plastik 1350–1550*, pp. 257–260; J. Svanberg, "Sankt Goran i medeltida konst i Sverige och Finland," *Iconografiske Post* 4, 1990, pp. 29–42; A. Karłowska-Kamzowa, "Der Drache des Nordens. Eine ikonographische Analyse der Stockholmer Darstellung des Kampfes des Heiligen Georgs von Bernt Notke," in: *Kościół i sztuka pobrzeża Bałtyku*, (meeting of the Association of Art Historians [Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki], Toruń), ed. D. Murawska, Toruń 1998, pp. 143–159; P. Tångeberg, *Wahrheit und Mythos. Bernt Notke*

Jan Białostocki has described in detail the figure's unusual form and manifold functions – as a political monument, an altarpiece, a reliquary and tomb:

Taking into account the richness of the political and religious symbolism, the group could be called the final work of illusion. The sculpture minutely mimics the elements of material reality: the wonderful horse bit and saint's armour, the dragon's victims' remnants, corpses, skulls, shells, small dragons, who as small reptiles crowd below the horse's hoofs. All this induces in the viewer a feeling of experiencing something real, even though fantastic and terrifying. The introduction of various materials, identical with those which form the objects – the horse's tail is made of actual equine hair, the dragon's horn is formed of deer's antlers – only enhance[ing] the illusion of realism [...] Undoubtedly, it was an altar of a highly original form, but following the patron's death in 1503, the monument was expanded to include Sten Sture's grave, placed inside a small structure in the form of a chapel, supporting the main figures. Thus, the structure fulfilled three roles. First and foremost, it presented the saint and his relics, given by Pope Alexander VI to Sten Sture in 1492; however, the figure had also a political meaning. In 1471, Sture conquered the Danish in the Battle of Brunkeberg, near Stockholm, and his victory was ascribed to the intercession of St. George, to whom the commander prayed before the battle. The monument was bound to glorify that triumph. Finally, the coat-of-arms of Sten Sture on the horse's bit directly highlight the connection between the saint and the historic hero and his grave. The symbolic, almost hieratical gesture of St. George who raises his sword can be variously interpreted. From the theological perspective he proclaims the victory of God over the forces of evil and Satan, the political reading of the gesture links it to the faith invested in the final victory of Swedes over Danes (as the battle of Brunkeberg did not resolve the conflict), and in relation to the private ambitions of the donor it expresses Sten Sture's hopes for the salvation of his soul and the triumph

und die Stockholmer St.-Georgs-Gruppe. Studien zu einem Hauptwerk niederländischer Bildschnitzerei, (Studia Jagellonica Lipsiensia 5), Ostfildern 2009 (see reviews – including: T. Jurkowlanec in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 71, 2009, no. 3, pp. 403–410 and J. Svanberg, “Was the St. George group in Stockholm made in Antwerp by an unknown Flemish master? Review of Peter Tångeberg's book (2009),” in: *Art, Cult and Patronage: Die visuelle Kultur im Ostseeraum zur Zeit Bernt Notkes*, pp. 323–327); H. Bengtsson, “Sankt Göransgruppen i Storkyrkan i Stockholm: nya och gamla iakttagelser,” *Uppland* 2013, pp. 9–60; L. Liepe, “The multi-materiality of St. George and the Dragon,” in: *Art, Cult and Patronage: Die visuelle Kultur im Ostseeraum zur Zeit Bernt Notkes*, pp. 199–207; P. Tångeberg, “Ausweglose Forschung? Nachsätze zur Stockholmer St.-Georgs-Gruppe vier Jahre nach Erscheinen meines Buches, nebst einigen Bemerkungen zum neuen Band des Corpus' der mittelalterlichen Holzskulptur und Tafelmalerei in Schleswig-Holstein,” in: *Niederländische Kunstexporte nach Nord- und Ostmitteleuropa vom 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert. Forschungen zu ihren Anfängen, zur Rolle böfischer Auftraggeber, der Künstler und ihrer Werkstattbetriebe*, ed. by J. Fajt et al., Ostfildern 2014, pp. 111–131; *Lübeck 1500. Kunstmetropole im Ostseeraum*, ed. by J.F. Richter, exh. cat., St. Annenmuseum, Lübeck 2015–2016, Petersberg 2015, cat. no. 6.

over death. Therefore, the elaborate and monumental character of this, one of the most innovative northern sculptures, reflects its deep and rich symbolism. Rarely did the imagination of the people in this era find such a striking form; the symbolic meaning of the captured action seems to slow down the dramatic tumult of the battle. The saint, whose sword is lifted in an eternal sign of hope, seems to ignore the terrible monster, dramatically struggling with the horse; the hero's gaze is directed straight ahead, towards the final triumph of good over evil, thanks to the assistance of God himself.³⁴

The construction and the general disposition of Notke's group is even more peculiar as it encourages the viewer to move. Itself full of dynamism, it stimulates the mobility of the viewer, to walk around it and to enter between the group of the knight, horse and dragon, and the distanced princess, placed under a pillar, whom St. George saves from oppression. Though the present arrangement of the monument is a result of the conservation works conducted in 1913 and 1932, and does not correspond with its original setting, the spatial division of the princess from the battlefield seems to have been planned from the outset. Therefore, the viewer had to move between the figures, and thus the effect of participatory viewing was further enhanced. The main group stood to the right of the church's nave, perhaps directly under the arch supporting the pulpit, though it was not clearly directed to any side – slightly turned to the high altar and slightly to the back of the nave. It does not have a front or façade; it is evenly worked out from all sides. Only as a kind of an altarpiece it required to be looked at frontally. In other instances, it was supposed to be viewed from different sides, ultimately requiring viewers to circle around it.

34 J.J. Białostocki, *Sztuka XV wieku od Parlerów do Dürera*, (ed. princ. *Il Quattrocento nell'Europa Settentrionale*, Turin 1989), trans. G. Przewłocki, ed. A. Ziemia, Warsaw 2010, pp. 356–368.



Fig. 97: Gilg Sesselschreiber; Peter Vischer the Elder; Hans Leinberger; Veit Stoss; Jörg Kölderer; Jörg Muskat; Bernhard, Arnold and Florian Abel, and other artists, *Tomb of Emperor Maximilian I and his Ancestors*, Court Church (Hofkirche) Innsbruck, 1502–1583

Over-life size figures decorate the majestic tomb of Emperor Maximilian in the Court Church (Hofkirche) in Innsbruck [figs. 97–100].³⁵ Executed in the early sixteenth century the work is the final highlight – apart from the tombs of the Burgundian Habsburgs in Brou – of the late medieval tradition of tomb sculpture of the Burgundian-Netherlandish origin (Sluter and others).

35 E. Scheicher, *Das Grabmal Kaiser Maximilians I. in der Innsbrucker Hofkirche*, in: *Österreichische Kunsttopographie, XLVII: Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Innsbruck. Die Hofbauten*, ed. J. Felmayer, K. i R. Oettinger, M. Frenzel, H. Arnold-Öttl, E. Scheicher, Vienna 1986, pp. 355–426; Th. DaCosta Kaufmann, *Höfe, Klöster und Städte. Kunst und Kultur in Mitteleuropa 1450–1800*, Cologne 1998, pp. 70–79; N. Hölzl, *Das goldene Zeitalter. Der Traum Kaiser Maximilians 1502–2002. Das größte Kaisermonument des Abendlandes*, Innsbruck 2001; M. Frenzel, *Kenotaph – Das Hochgrab Kaiser Maximilians I. in der Hofkirche zu Innsbruck*, Innsbruck 2013; *Emperor Maximilian I and the Age of Dürer*, ed. by E. Michel, M.L. Sternath, exh. cat., Albertina, Vienna 2013, cat. nos. 119–120. See further references for more literature on the subject.

The sculptural monument includes twenty-eight large, bronze figures of the Emperor's ancestors, family members, relatives and exemplary rulers; the tomb itself is formed of the kneeling, life-size figure of Maximilian, framed by an ornamental grid, and by twenty-four statuettes of saints from the House of Habsburg, placed on the choir gallery. Originally planned as further decoration for the tomb, the thirty-four busts of emperors were not installed and are now in Ambras Castle, a branch of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The monumental tomb sits above the central part of the nave, located on a high, multistep base, carved from the red marble from the Adnet quarry, near Salzburg (the same material used for the pillars supporting the vault). The sides of the monument are decorated with twenty-four reliefs in two rows, carved in white Carrara marble, which represent scenes from the life of the Emperor, based on the celebrated, large-scale woodcut '*Ehrenpforte*' of Maximilian I (see below). The figure of the Emperor kneeling on the slate is flanked by four female personifications of his virtues, placed on the edges. In between the pillars are the abovementioned bronze statues facing the sarcophagus, two in each intercolumn. They are large: measuring between 2.08 and 2.72 meters, and mounted on a twenty centimetre base, some of them are almost three meters in height. However, their current sequence does not correspond with the original scheme.

The origins of this great undertaking go back to the 1502, when a painter from Munich, Gilg Sesselschreiber, was appointed as court artist to Maximilian I. The account of Jörg Kölderer confirms that Sesselschreiber's employment was linked to the planned funerary monument, as he included the artist's discussion of his progress with the bronze casts. Conrad Peutinger, a humanist from Augsburg employed by the Emperor, played a key role in outlining the programme of the tomb, though Sesselschreiber's involvement must have been significant.

All sources, including Kölderer's account, confirmed by the written testimony of Wilhelm Schaff from 1547, (the last testator of Maximilian I) describe a specific sequence of the large statues, originally planned to include forty figures. They included the images of the Emperor's ancestors: Clovis I (died 511); Theodebert, King of Austrasia (died 612); Ottobert I, the mythical first Habsburgian Count to become a Duke; Hugh the Great, Count of Paris and Duke of Franks (died 956); Count Radebot of Habsburg (died 1045); Albrecht Count of Habsburg (died 1239); Rudolf I, King of Romans, the first Habsburgian King of Germany (died 1291); Albrecht I, King of Germany (died 1308); Elisabeth of Tirol (died 1313); Duke Albrecht II the Wise (died 1358); Duke Leopold III the Just (died 1386); Viridis Visconti (died 1414); Duke Ernest the Iron (died 1424); Cymburgis of Masovia (died 1429); Emperor Frederick III (died 1493); Eleonor of Portugal (died 1476); Kunigunde of Austria (died 1520); Duchess Mary of Burgundy (died 1482); Bianca Maria Sforza (died 1510); the Burgundian duke Philip the Fair (died

1506); Queen Joanna of Castile (the Mad; died 1555), and the Archduchess Margaret of Austria, the regent of the Netherlands (died 1530).

This was in addition to other rulers, who came from the cadet branches into the main dynasty: King Albrecht II (died 1439); Elisabeth of Hungary (died 1442); Ladislaus the Posthumous (died 1457); Duke Frederick of the Empty Pockets (died 1439), and Archduke Sigismund the Rich (died 1496). The figures were to also include the Burgundian dukes related to the Habsburg family: Philip the Good (died 1467) and Charles the Bold (died 1477), and the Iberian rulers: Ferdinand of Portugal (died 1383) and king Ferdinand II of Aragon (the Catholic; died 1516). Moreover, there were plans to include figures of saintly rulers and knights (in the order listed in the sources): King Ottokar II of Bohemia (died 1278); the Margrave of Austria Saint Leopold III, (died 1136); King Stephen I of Hungary (died 1038) and his wife Gisela of Bavaria (died 1033); the Ostrogoth king Theodoric the Great (Dietrich von Bern, Dietrich of Verona, died 526); Julius Caesar (died 44); Charlemagne (died 814); King Arthur (died 537?), and Godfrey of Bouillon (died 1100). The selection of the figures was dictated by a clear and complete political programme, based on the historic and genealogical interests of the Emperor, and assisted by a learned historian, Jakob Mennel. The House of Habsburg and thus Maximilian's rule were connected to the Roman emperors (Julius Caesar); Maximilian's dominion, through the demonstration of his royal and princely lineage, was therefore characterised as being universally pan-European.

According to Mennel, the Habsburgs were the descendants of Trojans, through the early Franks (hence the presence of the figures of Clovis I, Theudebert and Charlemagne) and the Capetian dynasty (Hugh the Great, as the father of Hugh Capet). Following the legendary first Habsburgs, the historic lineage of the rulers leads from Count Albrecht and King Rudolph I to the Emperor Frederick III and his wife Eleonor of Portugal – Maximilian's parents – and to the cadet Albertinian line (King Albrecht II, his wife Elisabeth and son Ladislaus the Posthumous) and from Tirol (Prince Frederick IV and his son Archduke Sigismund). Following his parents, the closest relatives of Maximilian were then presented: his sister Cunegonde; his two wives Mary of Burgundy and Bianca Maria Sforza; his son Philip I the Fair as the King of Castile and the Duke of Burgundy with his wife Joanna the Mad of Castile; his daughter Margaret of Austria, the governor of the Habsburg Netherlands. These figures legitimised the Habsburg rulership (or the claim to such power) over Austria, Lombardy, the Burgundian-Netherlands, and Iberia. This message is reinforced by the figures of Burgundian princes Philip the Good and Charles the Brave (his father-in-law) and Ferdinand, the Duke of Portugal, and the father-in-law's son, King Ferdinand of Aragon. The images of Stephen I of Hungary and his wife Gisela, as well as Ladislaus the Posthumous, represent Maximilian's

ambitions to the Hungarian throne. Leopold III Babenberg and Ottokar II of Bohemia, as the last duke of Styria, determined the inheritance within the Austrian domain. The ideal knight-rulers: Arthur, Dietrich, and Gottfried de Bouillon, together with Julius Caesar and Charlemagne, belong to the larger, traditional set of nine brave heroes, capturing the ideal of knight-hood for Maximilian, whilst at the same time alluding to the virtue of his bravery. Julius Caesar, Charlemagne and Theodoric the Great symbolise the renovation of the Roman Empire, represented fully by the busts from Julius Caesar to Theodosius. On the other hand, the statuettes of the saints from the House of Habsburg – irrespective of a few saints among the ancestors visualised in the large-scale series (such as Charlemagne, Stephen I and Leopold III) – highlight the sanctity of Maximilian's imperial power.

The history of the making of the tomb is incredibly long and complex. Gilg Sesselschreiber began working on the monument (presumably) soon after his appointment as the court painter in 1502, when he still lived in Munich, his permanent residence. In 1507, he moved to Innsbruck. He did relatively little over these five years, as he was obliged by the Emperor to constantly submit drawings to Conrad Peutinger. When in 1508 Maximilian became the Emperor, the pressure to complete the project intensified the work. However, it was only in 1509 that the first figure – that of Ferdinand of Portugal – was cast in Peter Löffler's workshop. In 1513, Sesselschreiber was ordered to surpass the speed at which he worked on the statues of Mary of Burgundy and Cimburgis of Masovia, and subsequently those of Margaret of Austria, Eleonor of Portugal and Philip the Beautiful. The documents from 1513 and 1516 indicate that it was planned for the figures to be gilded, though this was never executed. In 1513, due to Sesselschreiber's inefficiency, the patron decided to turn to other artists. From that time date the statues of Theodoric and King Arthur made in the workshop of Peter Vischer the Elder in Nuremberg. That same year two further statues were cast in a Netherlandish workshop, following the models executed by the newly employed German woodcarvers: Hans Leinberger (the model of the statue of Count Albrecht Habsburg) and Veit Stoss (who was to design the figure of Cimburgis of Masovia). The making of the busts of Roman emperors was commissioned from the workshops active in Augsburg; the first twelve were executed between 1509 and 1517, designed by Jörg Muskat, and cast by Hans and Laux Zotmann; the authors of the remaining busts are unknown. In situ, in Innsbruck, Sesselschreiber received assistance from his son Christoph and brother-in-law Sebastian Häuserer. The contract with Sesselschreiber for the execution of the tomb was finally revoked in 1518,

and the commission was passed to Stephen Godl, who from 1514/1515 cast statuettes of the Habsburg saints. His collaborators were Jörg Kölderer as the designer and Leonhard Magt who carved the models. The figure of Count Albrecht of Habsburg was completed in 1518, following the project by Hans Leinberger [figs. 98–100].



Fig. 98: Peter Vischer the Elder (model and cast), *King Arthur*, figure in the Court Church (Hofkirche), Innsbruck, 1513



Fig. 99: Albrecht Dürer (design), Hans Leinberger (model), Stephan Godl (cast), *Count Albrecht IV Habsburg*, figure in the Court Church (Hofkirche), Innsbruck, 1513–1518



Fig. 100: Veit Stoss? (model), Netherlandish workshop (cast), *Cymburgis of Masovia*, figure in the Court Church (Hofkirche), Innsbruck, 1513–1518

The Emperor's death on 12th January 1519 caused a hiatus in the work on the tomb. The will drafted overnight, from 31st December 1518 to 1st January 1519, specified the preliminary burial site and the arrangement of the sculptures – in the chapel of St. George's Castle in Wiener Neustadt. Here, in the gallery, one hundred statuettes of the saints of the House of Habsburg, and thirty-four busts of Roman emperors, were to be placed. In turn, the large statues were to be displayed in the nave on wooden bases, suspended from above by chains to the roof trusses below the vaulting. The display of

the tomb was not executed as planned, because of the building's stability. The number of the large-scale figures was reduced to the present twenty-eight. The appointment of Maximilian's brother, Archduke Ferdinand, as his successor in Austria, gave a new stimulus to work on the monument. By the time of Leonhard Magt's death in 1532 and Stephan Godl's in 1534, seventeen large-scale statues were completed. From 1518, Jörg Kölderer provided the new models, which informed the statues of St. Leopold, Leopold III the Pious, Emperor Frederik III, Archduke Sigismund, Frederick of the Empty Pockets, Bianca Maria Sforza, and, following Sesselschreiber's improved design, that of Charles the Bold. In 1528, Ferdinand, by then the German king, commissioned Kölderer to make the designs for the display of the figures in three possible locations: in St. George's chapel, the convent church in Wiener Neustadt and the Cathedral (then a parish church) of St. Stephen in Vienna; in all the sites he maintained the original idea of displaying forty large-scale figures. In each design, he also placed the tomb in the middle of the interior. However, he did not outline the position of the emperors' busts, nor the statuettes of the saints. In the 1530s, the work on the monument slowly died down. Between 1526 and 1532 in Godl's workshop another group of figures was cast, including: King Albrecht I, King Albrecht II, Duke Albrecht II, Elisabeth of Hungary, Ferdinand of Aragon and Gottfried de Bouillon. These statues are slightly weaker artistically, as their designs were executed by an average painter, Hans Polhaimer (his drawing for a figure of Gottfried is now in the Museum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck).

The final stage of the work began in 1547. The last testator of Maximilian's will, Wilhelm Schurff, reminded the emperor's nephew, King Ferdinand, about the monument, and outlined a new workplan, which included the display of forty large statues and one hundred statuettes of saints. Gregor Löffler, Peter's son, assumes responsibility for the casts; the painter, Christoph Amberger, designed the final ten missing statues, to be carved by Veit Amberger. The statue of Clovis I was cast in 1550, and the following year the model of the figure of Charlemagne was completed. In 1549, King Ferdinand confirmed the final location of the tomb, namely a purposefully commissioned and constructed church and Franciscan convent in Innsbruck – named the Hofkirche. The church was built from 1553 by the court architect, Hermes Schallautzer, who accounted for the forty large statues in between the columns of the nave, and the suspension from these columns of the hundred statuettes of saints and the display of the emperors' busts in the gallery. The tomb with twenty-four reliefs, a hundred and ten coat-of-arms, and the kneeling figure of Maximilian was designed by Francesco Terzio, with Heinrich Vogtherr's assistance. However, the 1556 design was not executed. The monument was completed only between

1561–1570 by brothers Bernhard, Arnold and Florian Abel, in collaboration with Alexander Colin, Georg van der Wendt, Hieronymus Longhi, Noa Fechner and Hans Lendenstreich. The figure of the emperor (1582–1583) was designed by Florian Abel, with the model prepared by Alexander Colin and cast by Lodovico del Duca from Sicily.

The unbearably long process of execution of the original design, lasting well into the sixteenth century, meant that the parts of the monument, in particular the tomb and the figure of the emperor, are formally indebted to the Italian Renaissance. However, the large statues clearly derive from the Late Gothic tradition, despite some formal affinities with Renaissance sculpture. Therefore, it is challenging – and perhaps not that significant – to try and define a style that is neither Gothic nor Early Modern.

In the long history of its making, the monument was shaped by various teams of designers and artists. They were responsible for its execution, and for the extent and number of statues shifted, as well as for the changing spatial arrangement of its figures and its location, together with the overall design of the monument (with or without the tomb).

The Emperor Maximilian I – according to the source from 1527, citing his grandson Ferdinand I – “did not wish to display a sarcophagus or a tomb with his body resting in it, surrounded by [bronze] cast figures.” From this account, it is possible to infer that originally the tomb was not intended to stand in the middle of the monument, and that the emperor was to be buried below ground level, and the standing figures.³⁶ However, it is also possible that the statuettes of the Habsburg saints from the balcony, and the busts of emperors, now in Ambras castle, were designed to decorate sides of the tomb, as pleurants and images of historic predecessors.

36 **The grave chapel of Maximilian I in Innsbruck:** V. Oberhammer, *Die Bronzestandbilder des Maximilian-Grabmales in der Hofkirche zu Innsbruck*, Innsbruck 1935; E.F. Bange, *Das Grabmal Kaiser Maximilians I. in der Hofkirche zu Innsbruck*, Berlin 1936, pp. 60 ff.; K. Oettinger, *Die Bildhauer Maximilians am Innsbrucker Kaisergrabmal*, Nuremberg 1966; E. Egg, *Die Hofkirche in Innsbruck*, Innsbruck–Vienna–Munich 1974, p. 54 (new edition: E. Egg, M. Oberer, *Hofkirche in Innsbruck: Grabmal Kaiser Maximilians I*, Ried 1993); Ch.S. Wood, “Maximilian I as Archeologist,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 58, 2005, pp. 1128–1174, reprinted as “Maximilian I. als Archäologe,” in: *Maximilians Ruhmeswerk. Künste und Wissenschaften im Umkreis Kaiser Maximilians I*, ed. by J.-D. Müller, H.-J. Ziegeler, Berlin–Boston 2015, pp. 131–184, esp. 162–165; B. Kneller, “Formen des Kulturtransfers am Hof Kaiser Maximilians I. Muster genealogischer Herrschaftslegitimation,” in: *Kulturtransfer am Fürstenhof: höfische Austauschprozesse und ihre Medien im Zeitalter Kaiser Maximilians I*, ed. by M. Müller, K.-H. Spiess, Berlin 2013, pp. 52–103; A. Kagerer, *Macht und Medien um 1500: Selbstinszenierungen und Legitimationsstrategien von Habsburgern und Fuggern*, Berlin–Boston 2017, chapter 2.2.7.

This possibility would confirm that a tomb was intended from the outset, and in any case these figures are included in Kölderer's account from 1538, which described the original sculptural design for the monument.³⁷ The scholars who accept the hypothesis about the tomb being planned from the outset, interpreted the display of the large-scale figures as suggestive of a funeral procession, which would match Augustus's burial described by Dio Cassius (Vinzenz Oberhammer 1935). This seems to be supported by the fact that some of these figures once carried candles or torches in their hands. By contrast, those who rejected the idea about the tomb being intended as the integral part of the monument perceived the group of ancestors and relatives as mourning the deceased, with reference to the Burgundian and French tradition of pleurants placed on the sides of the tomb (Oettinger 1965). Erwin Panofsky (1964) argued – not unreasonably – the monument in Innsbruck to be the culmination of that tradition, and at the same time he highlighted the uniqueness of transforming specific, historic figures into a weeping crowd, which he linked to the process of transforming the ancient anonymity of the weepers to the specific mourning crowd of ancestors and relatives.³⁸

One aspect of the monument was fixed from the outset, namely the concept of surrounding the burial site or cenotaph with figures, in between which the viewer could enter. He or she could watch the majestic figures, slightly intimidated, and certainly struck by their majestic power, attained through their statuesque poses and greater than life-size scale. The viewer was to feel overwhelmed. S/he entered the rows of powerful figures, either joining the funeral procession, or becoming part of the weeping congregation. Her or his movement organised the scenario of this evocative, symbolic event. The mobility of the beholder caused the sensation of active participation in the funerary and commemorative act. The execution of the specific figures – the detailed modelling of the robes, attributes, and heraldry on the coat-of-arms and ornaments – encouraged the viewer to approach the statue and identify the specific figure, reading the name and title inscribed on its bases, looking at the coat-of-arms, admiring the faces and characterisation of the individual statues. The viewer navigated between the statues, passed from one to another, rethinking the dynastic and political message conveyed by the monument.

37 K. Oettinger, "Die Grabmalkonzeptionen Kaiser Maximilians," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 19, 1965, p. 170 and especially pp. 179 ff.

38 E. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, London 1964, pp. 62, 76.



Fig. 101: Loys van Boghem (Lodewijk van Bodeghem), Church of Saint-Nicolas-de-Tolentin in Brou, near Bourg-en-Bresse, 1513–1532, view of the exterior



Fig. 102: Loys van Boghem (Lodewijk van Bodeghem), Church of Saint-Nicolas-de-Tolentin in Brou, near Bourg-en-Bresse, 1513–1532, interior



Fig. 103: Loys van Boghem (Lodewijk van Bodeghem), choir screen, Church in Brou, 1526–1532



Fig. 104: Loys van Boghem (Lodewijk van Bodeghem), Church in Brou – interior of the choir

The theatricality governing the perception of the monument, based on the directed mobility of the viewer, sets this work apart from other funerary multi-figure sculptures of the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern period. It is strikingly different, for instance, from the pantheon of the Habsburg rulers of the Burgundian Netherlands in the church in Brou, near Bourg-en-Bresse in Burgundy, erected between 1513 and 1532 [figs. 101–107].³⁹ The splendid monument (1526–1532) – including tombs carved in marble and alabaster for Margaret of Austria, her husband Philibert of Savoy, and his mother Marguerite de Bourbon – is the work of Conrat Meit, the German sculptor from Worms, active in the Netherlands at the court of Margaret of Austria

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- 39 **Church at Brou near Bourg-en-Bresse:** R. Sanfaçon, *L'architecture flamboyante en France*, Université de Laval, Quebec, 1971; M.-F. Poirer, *Le monastère de Brou. Le chef-d'œuvre d'une fille d'empereur*, (Caisse nationale des monuments historiques et des sites, CNRS), Paris 1994; M. Hörsch, *Architektur unter Margarethe von Österreich, Regentin der Niederlande (1507–1530)*. "Eine bau- und architekturgeschichtliche Studie zum Grabkloster St.-Nicolas-de-Tolentin in Brou bei Bourg-en-Bresse," *Academiae Analecta. Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten, Klasse der Schone Kunsten* 58, Brussels 1994; J. Baudoin, *La sculpture flamboyante en Bourgogne et Franche-Comté*, Nonette 1996; A. Carpino, "Margaret of Austria's funerary complex at Brou: Conjugal love, political ambition, or personal glory," in: *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors, and Connoisseurs*, ed. by C. Lawrence, University Park, Pa., 1997, pp. 37–52; M.-F. Poirer, *Le Monastère royal de Brou*, Paris 2000; R. Oursel, "Les flambeaux de la nuit. De La Chaise-Dieu à Brou, aspects de l'architecture religieuse en France à la fin du Moyen-Age," in: *Du gothique flamboyant à l'art de la Renaissance*, (Recontre avec le Patrimoine Religieux), Châteauroux 2001, pp. 100–127; Ch. Freigang, "Chöre als Wunderwerke. Bildinszenierungen, Blickachsen und Materialtranszendenz in der Klosterkirche von Brou bei Bourg-en-Bresse," in: *Kunst und Liturgie. Choranlagen des Spätmittelalters – ihre Architektur, Ausstattung und Nutzung*, (congress: Blaubeuren 2001), ed. by A. Moraht-Fromm, Ostfildern 2003, pp. 59–83; L.D. Gelfand, "Margaret of Austria and the encoding of power in patronage: The funerary foundation at Brou," in: *Widowhood and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by A. Levy, Aldershot 2003, pp. 145–159; E. Matt Kavalier, "Margaret of Austria, ornament, and the court style of Brou," in: *Artists at Court: Image-making and Identity 1300–1550*, (symposium: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston), ed. S. J. Campbell. E. Welch et al., Chicago University Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 124–137; Ch. de Mérindol, "Le programme iconographique du couvent de Brou. Réflexions sur les églises à destination funéraire," in: *Demeures d'éternité. Églises et chapelles funéraires aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, ed. by J. Guillaume, Paris 2005, pp. 147–156; M.-A. Sarda, Ph. Magali, *The Monastère Royal de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse*, Paris 2005; E. Matt Kavalier, "Renaissance Gothic. Pictures of Geometry and Narratives of Ornament," *Art History* 29, 2006, pp. 1–46; his, "Geometers at Brou: Architecture and Ornament in Spain, Brabant and Western Europe around 1500," in: *Brou, un monument européen à aube de la Renaissance*, ed. by C. Pieri, Bourg-en-Bresse 2006; L.D. Gelfand, "Regional styles and political

in Mechelen,⁴⁰ and the workshop of the Flemish architect and sculptor Loys van Boghem (Lodewijk van Bodeghem). Jan van Roome, Jean Perréal and Michel Colombe were responsible for the first designs for the tombs, though the extent to which Meit used the projects in his final work is unknown. The entrance to the choir with the tombs is anticipated by a choir screen with imaginative forms *flamboyant*, created by van Boghem. He was also responsible for the design of the architectural setting of the tombs in the late medieval complex and ornamental style. The spatial arrangement of the monuments is static, with the tomb of Philibert of Savoy placed in the centre flanked by the tombs of Margaret of Austria and Marguerite de Bourbon. The viewer can grasp the entire setting at a single glance and approach the figures to look at each independently. There is no scenic, directed, multi-level movement of the beholder in this ecclesiastical space; there is no unfolding spectacle with the active participation of the viewer, as in Innsbruck; there is only a clear presentation of the commemorative monuments.

ambitions: Margaret of Austria's monastic foundation at Brou," in: *Cultural Exchange between the Low Countries and Italy (1400–1600)*, ed. by I. Alexander-Skipnes, Turnhout 2007, pp. 193–202; L.D. Gelfand, "Virtues and/or Sibyls: Ambiguity and the identity of the sculpted female figures on the tomb of Philibert le Beau in Brou," *Iconographica* 7, 2008, pp. 79–89; M. Lefftz, "Contribution à l'étude de la petite statuaire de l'église de Brou: entre France et anciens Pays-Bas," in: *Les échanges artistiques entre les anciens Pays-Bas et la France, 1482–1814*, (colloquium: Lille 2008), ed. by G. Maës, J. Blanc, Turnhout 2010, pp. 91–102; E. Matt Kavalier, *Renaissance Gothic: Architecture and the Arts in Northern Europe, 1470–1540*, New Haven 2012; *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. by C. Hourihan, 6 vols., New York–Oxford 2012, s.v. *Brou*.

- 40 **Conrat Meit:** J.L. Burk, *Conrat Meit. Ein nordeuropäischer Bildhauer der Renaissance*, PhD diss., Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe 2003 (CD-ROM); J.L. Burk, "Conrat Meit, court sculptor to Margaret of Austria," in: *Women of Distinction: Margaret of York, Margaret of Austria*, ed. by D. Eichberger, Turnhout 2005, pp. 277–284; J.L. Burk, *Conrat Meit: Margaret of Austria's Court Sculptor in Malines and Brou*, Centre des Monuments Nationaux, France, pp.127–146; *Conrat Meit. Bildhauer der Renaissance 'desgleichen ich kein gesehen....'*, ed. by R. Eikermann, J.L. Burk, exh. cat., Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich 2006.



Fig. 105: Tomb of Margaret of Austria, design by Jan van Roome, 1509 – c. 1510, carved by Conrat Meit, 1526–1532, Church in Brou

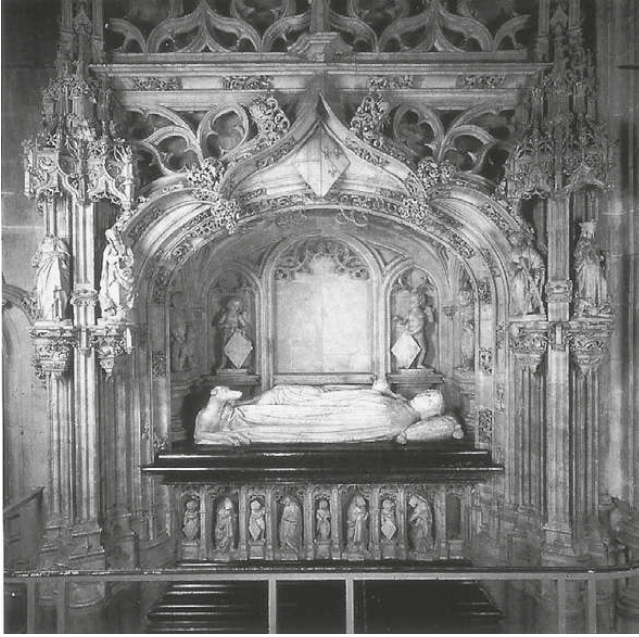


Fig. 106: Tomb of Margarethe de Bourbon, original design by Jean Perréal and Michel Colombe, 1509–1512 (executed?); with figures by Conrat Meit, 1526–1532, Church in Brou (photo: author's archive)



Fig. 107: Tomb of Philibert of Sabaudia, original design by Jean Perréal and Michel Colombe, 1509–1512 (executed?); with figures by Conrat Meit, 1526–1532, Church in Brou

II.3. Large-scale altarpieces

The large scale was vividly present in the new forms devised by devotional art – in large-scale altarpieces. Between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries painted retables in Northern Europe were not typically monumental; on the contrary, large formats were notable exceptions: the *Maestà di Santa Trinità* by Cimabue (3.85 x 2.23m, c. 1280–1290), the *Maestà di Ognissanti* by Giotto (3.25 x 2.04m, c. 1310) – both now on display at the Uffizi Gallery; the *Maestà* by Duccio in Siena Cathedral (main panel 2.11 x 4.26m, which with its predella and superstructure combined stretches to c. 4 m in height, 1308–1311)⁴¹ and his *Madonna Rucellai* from Santa Maria Novella in Florence, also now at the Uffizi (2.60 x 3.05 m, 1333). The only surviving Northern example, which can be compared to the Italian altarpieces, is the *Altarpiece from Vyšší Brod* (Hohenfurth) dated 1347–1350 (Prague, Národní Galerie) [fig. 108]. This unique work was created in the milieu of the Emperor Charles IV, commissioned by the court dignitary Petr of Rožemberk, and originally intended as a large, multi-panel altarpiece (*Altarwand*) measuring 3 x 2.7m.⁴² It was only around 1380 that the Netherlands and Germany began to adopt the new idiom of large-scale altarpieces with carved central sections and extensive painted wings. The beginning of the trend is marked in the West by commissions made by patricians – *The Altarpiece from Grabow* by Master Bertram, from the church of Sankt Petri in Hamburg (1379–1383, Hamburg, Kunsthalle, 2.77 x 7.26 m) [fig. 109]⁴³ and the commission by Burgundian dukes for the Carthusian monastery, Champmol – by Jacques

41 L. Bellosi, *Duccio. La Maestà*, Milano 1998; L. Bellosi, G. Ragionieri, “Duccio di Buoninsegna,” *Art dossier* 193, Florence 2003, pp. 26–44.

42 *Altarpiece from Vyšší Brod*: J. Pešina, *Der Hohenfurth Meister*, Hanau 1982, see in particular p. 19; his, *The Master of the Hohenfurth Altarpiece and Bohemian Gothic Panel Painting*, London 1989; P. Kalina, “Symbolism and Ambiguity in the Work of the Vyšší Brod Master,” *Umění* 45, 1996, pp. 149–66; H.J. Hlaváčková, “Panel Paintings in the Cycle of the Life of Christ from Vyšší Brod (Hohenfurt),” in: *King John of Luxembourg and the Art of His Era (1296–1346)*, (conference Prague 1996), ed. K. Benešová, Prague 1998, pp. 244–255; *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia, 1347–1437*, ed. by B. Drake Boehm, J. Fajt, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York – Pražský hrad, Prague New York–Prague 2005; J. Royt, “Poznámky k rekonstrukci a k ikonografii Vyšebrodského oltáře,” in: *Ars videndi: professori Jaromír Homolka ad honorem*, ed. by A. Mudra, M. Ottová, České Budějovice 2006, pp. 175–194; Z. Neubauer, *O pokladu v srdci Evropy. Jedna z cest k duchovnímu bohatství obrazů Vyšebrodského oltáře*, Praha 2011; J. Royt, *Prague of Charles IV, 1316–1378*, Prague 2016; *Art in the Czech Lands 800–2000*, ed. by T. Petrasová, R. Švácha, Praha 2017.

43 *Altarpiece from Grabow by the Master Bertram*: E.H. Dube, *The Grabow Altar of Master Bertram von Minden*, dissertation, Brown University, Providence 1982; Ch. Beutler, *Der Hochaltar von Sankt Petri*, Frankfurt a. M. 1984; S. Hauschild, “Meister Bertram von Minden,” in: *Goldgrund und Himmelslicht. Die Kunst des Mittelalters*

de Baerze and Melchior Broederlam (1390–1399, now at Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1.67 × 5.02 m).⁴⁴ In Bohemia, in c. 1380, *The Altarpiece from Třeboň* (Wittingau) was created (now at the Národní Galerie, Prague) – probably winged, and 2.8–3 m. in height.⁴⁵ The early Netherlandish and German

in Hamburg, ed. U.M. Schneede, exh. cat., Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg 1999, pp. 98–117; S. Hauschild, *Der Petri-Altar von Meister Bertram*, Hamburg 2002; H. Reinitzer, *Erschaffung, Fall und Wiederbringung des Lichts. Zum Bildprogramm des St.-Petri-Altars in der Hamburger Kunsthalle*, Hamburg 2002; S. Hauschild, M. Sitt, *Der Petri-Altar von Meister Bertram*, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg 2008.

- 44 **Altarpieces from Champmol by Jacques de Baerze and Melchior Broederlam:** D.M. Hinkley, *The Dijon altarpiece by Melchior Broederlam and Jacques de Baerze: a study of its iconographic integrity*, diss., Los Angeles University (1976), microfilm: Ann Arbor 1982; R. Didier, J.W. Steyaert, “Passionsaltar, Jacques de Baerze,” in: *Die Parler und der Schöne Stil 1350–1400. Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern*, 2 vol. (exh. cat. and essays), ed. by A. Legner, Cologne 1978–1980, vol. 1, pp. 56–58; M. Comblen-Sonkes, N. Veronee-Verhaegen, *Le musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, (Les Primitifs flamands: corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux au quinzième siècle 14)*, Brussels 1986, s.v.; M. Beaulieu, V. Beyer, *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs français du Moyen Âge*, Paris 1992, s.v.; S. Bichler, “Les retables de Jacques de Baerze,” in: *Actes des Journées internationales Claus Sluter*, (Association Claus Sluter, Dijon, Déc. 1990), Dijon 1992, pp. 23–36; Ch. Minott, “The meaning of the Baerze-Broederlam altarpiece,” in: *A Tribute to Robert A. Koch: Studies in the Northern renaissance*, Princeton 1994, pp. 131–146; R. Prochno, *Die Kartause von Champmol, Grablege der burgundischen Herzöge 1364–1477*, Berlin, 2002, pp. 128–136; *Art from the Court of Burgundy: The Patronage of Philip the Bold and John the Fearless 1364–1419* (in French: *L’Art à la cour de Bourgogne. Le mécénat de Philippe le Hardi et de Jean sans Peur, 1364–1419*), ed. by S. Jugie et al., exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon – The Cleveland Museum of Art, 2004–2005, Cleveland 2004, cat. nos. 67, 68 and 70; J. Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, the Graphic Arts from 1350 to 1575*, 2nd edition, revised by L. Silver and H. Luttikhuisen, Upper Saddle River (NJ), 2005; *Miroirs du sacré. Les retables sculptés à Bruxelles. XV^e-XVI^e siècles. Production, formes et usages*, ed. by B. d’Hainaut-Zveny, Brussels 2005, pp. 113–116; S.C.M. Lindquist, Agency, *Visibility and Society at the Chartreuse de Champmol*, Aldershot 2008, reprint Abingdon–New York 2016, pp. 6, 36, 50, 106–108, 122, 148, 152, 154, 157; *Les premiers retables (XII^e – début du XV^e siècle). Une mise en scène du sacré*, Musée du Louvre, Paris 2009, pp. 168–170; *Pre-Eyckian Panel Painting in the Low Countries*, ed. C. Stroo, 2 vol., Brussels 2009, vol. 1: *Catalogue*, pp. 17–19, 22–32, 43, 91–93; C. Currie, “Genesis of a Pre-Eyckian Masterpiece: Melchior Broederlam’s Painted Wings for the Crucifixion Altarpiece,” in: *Pre-Eyckian Panel Painting in the Low Countries*, ed. C. Stroo, Brussels 2009, vol. 2 (*Essays*), pp. 23–86; M. Tomasi, “Matériaux, techniques, commanditaires et espaces. Le système des retables à la chartreuse de Champmol,” *Netherlandish Yearbook for History of Art*, 62, 2012 [2013], pp. 28–55; *The Retables of the Chartreuse de Champmol*, ed. by S. Jugie and C. Tran-Bourdonneau, Ghent 2014 (especially: S. Nash, *The retables of Jacques de Baerze and Melchior Broederlam made for the Chartreuse de Champmol: A reconsideration of their creation and meaning*, pp. 26–39).
- 45 **Altarpiece from Třeboň:** J. Royt, *The Master of the Třeboň Altarpiece*, Prague–Chicago 2015; *Art in the Czech Lands 800–2000*, ed. by T. Petrasová, R. Švácha, Praha 2017.

painted altarpieces were not particularly impressive. A typical example is *The Norfolk Triptych* dated c. 1415 (Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen), which with closed wings measures 33.2 x 32.3cm, even though it imitates an imposing architectural structure [fig. 110].⁴⁶



Fig. 108: Master of the Vyšší Brod, *Altarpiece from Vyšší Brod* (Hohenfurth), 1347–1350, Prague, Národní Galerie

46 *The Norfolk Triptych*: J.W.Steyaert, “Sculpture and the Van Eycks: Some Mosan parallels,” in: *Investigating Jan van Eyck: Essays delivered as papers at the Jan van Eyck Symposium held at the National Gallery on 13–14 March 1998 / The National Gallery*, ed. by S. Foister, S. Jones, D. Cool, The National Gallery London, Turnhout 2000, pp. 119–130; V. Herzner, “Das Norfolk-Triptychon in Rotterdam – das früheste Werk Jan van Eycks?,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 68, 2005, pp. 1–22; S. Kemperdick, F. Lammertse et al., *The Road to Van Eyck*, exh. cat., Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam 2012, cat. no. 33 (with further literature).



Fig. 109: Master Bertram, *The Grabow Altarpiece*, from the church of Sankt Petri in Hamburg, 1379–1383, Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle



Fig. 110: Southern Netherlandish or Mosan (Liège?) master, *The Norfolk Altarpiece*, c. 1415, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen

The end of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries saw the increased popularity of the large-scale painted retables in the North, as well as in Italy and in Spain. The monumental scale was characteristic of altarpieces commissioned by private patricians and guilds. In the *Ghent Altarpiece* (3.70 x 5.17m), the main figures are almost two meters high. Some of the largest examples of painted altarpiece include: the lost *Descent from the Cross* by the workshop of the Master of Flémalle, active in the circle of Robert Campin (2.8 x 4.7m; the fragment showing the *Thief at the Cross* is in the Städel Museum in Frankfurt; the copy by the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula is in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool) [fig. 111]; *The Last Judgment from Beaune* (2.20 x 5.47m) [fig. 112]; *The Triptych of the Seven Sacraments* (2.04 x 2.30m) [fig. 239] and the *Crucifixion from Scheut* (3.25 x 1.92m) by Rogier van der Weyden; *The Portinari Altarpiece* by Hugo van der Goes (2.53 x 5.85m); the *Triptych of the Last Judgment* in Gdańsk/Danzig (2.42 x 3.6m) [fig. 115]; *The Triptych of Two Saints John* in Bruges (1.93 x 3.90 m) [fig. 118] and *The Passion Triptych* from Lübeck (2.02 x 2.76m), all by Hans Memling, together with his other work, *The Altarpiece from Nájera* (originally c. 5–6 x 6–7 m), preserved in a fragmentary state [fig. 120]. In the territory of Germany, more or less monumental examples of entirely painted altarpieces included: *The Altarpiece of the Berswordt Family* from the Church of Our Lady in Dortmund (c. 1395, 1.17 x 3.36 m.),⁴⁷ *St. Jacobi*

47 **Master of the Berswordt Altarpiece:** F. Jacobs, *Der Meister des Berswordt-Altars*, dissertation, Universität Münster 1983; B. Corley, *Conrad von Soest, Painter among Merchant Princes*, London 1996; *Der Berswordt-Meister und die Dortmunder Malerei um 1400, Stadtkultur im Spätmittelalter*, ed. by A. Zupancic, Th. Schilp, Bielefeld 2002; U. Gast, “‘Im Niemandland’. Alte Thesen und neue Ideen zu den stilistischen Voraussetzungen der Malereien des Retabels in St. Jacobi zu Göttingen,” in: *Das Hochaltarretabel der St. Jacobi-Kirche in Göttingen*, ed. by B. Carqué, H. Röckelein, (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 213), Göttingen 2005, pp. 415–444; G.J. Pfeiffer, *Die Malerei am Niederrhein und in Westfalen um 1400. Der Meister des Berswordt-Retabels und der Stilwandel der Zeit*, Petersberg 2009..

Altarpiece in the St. Jacobi church in Göttingen (1402, 2,63 x 7 m.),⁴⁸ *The Altarpiece from Niederwildungen* by Conrad von Soest in the city church in Bad Wildungen (1403, 1.88 x 6.11 m),⁴⁹ *The Altarpiece from Ortenberg* (c. 1410–1420, Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum, 1 x 3.25m),⁵⁰ *The Altarpiece of the Adoration of the Magi* by Stefan Lochner from the chapel of the townhall in Cologne (today in its Cathedral, c. 1446–1448; 2.6 x 5.7m), and *The Altarpiece of the Fathers of the Church* by Michael Pacher, from the Augustinian Church in Neustift, near Brixen (c. 1475–1480, Munich, Alte

48 **St. Jacobi Altarpiece in Göttingen:** *Das Hochaltarretabel der St. Jacobi-Kirche in Göttingen*, ed. by B. Carqué, H. Röckelein, (Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 213), Göttingen 2005.

49 **Conrad von Soest and the Altarpiece from Niederwildungen:** A. Stange, *Conrad von Soest*, Königstein i.T. 1966; A. Engelbert, *Conrad von Soest. Ein Dortmunder Maler um 1400*, Dortmund 1995; B. Corley, *Conrad von Soest, Painter among Merchant Princes*, London 1996 (in German *Conrad von Soest. Maler unter fürstlichen Kaufherren*, Berlin 2000); *Der Berswordt-Meister und die Dortmunder Malerei um 1400, Stadtkultur im Spätmittelalter*, ed. by A. Zupancic, Th. Schilp, Bielefeld 2002; W. Fischer, *Die Bilderwelt des Conrad von Soest. Der Wildunger Altar. Seine Symbole, seine Vorbilder im Direktvergleich: Conrad als Bildgestalter*, Bad Wildungen 2003; *Conrad von Soest. Neue Forschungen über den Maler und die Kulturgeschichte der Zeit um 1400*, ed. B. Buberl, Gütersloh 2004; *Dortmund und Conrad von Soest im spätmittelalterlichen Europa*, ed. by Th. Schilp, B. Welzel, Bielefeld 2004; W. Fischer, *Der Wildunger Altar. Die Bilderwelt des Conrad von Soest*, Bad Wildungen 2003, 2nd revised edition Korbach 2005; I. Sandner, “Unter Farbschichten verborgen. Die Gemälde des Conrad von Soest und seiner Werkstatt unter infraroter Strahlung,” *Westfalen* 85/86, 2007/2008 (2010), pp. 221–224; B. Welzel, “Namensnennung und Memoria bei Conrad von Soest,” in: *Künstler-Signaturen von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, (conference in Berlin 2008), ed. N. Hegener, F. Horsthemke, Petersberg 2013, pp. 116–125; K. Niehr, “Das Flügelretabel aus Bad Wildungen,” in: *Mittelalterliche Retabel in Hessen*, vol. 2: *Werke, Kontexte, Ensembles*, ed. by U. Schütte, H. Locher, K. Niehr, J. Sander, X. Stolzenburg, Petersberg 2019, pp. 146–149.

50 **Altarpiece from Ortenberg:** G. Bott, W. Beeh, *Der Ortenberger Altar*, Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt 1981; D.J. Hempelmann, *Der Ortenberger Altar. Untersuchungen zur mittelalterlichen Kunst und Maltechnik um 1400*, dissertation, University of Heidelberg 1998; *Der Ortenberger Altar*, ed. by E. M. Vetter, D. Hempelmann, R. Kühnen, Wiesbaden 2000; R. Suckale, M. Weniger, M. Wundram, *Gothic*, (Taschen) 2006, pp. 14–19; Th. Foerster, *Der Ortenberger Altar*, in: *Mittelalterliche Retabel in Hessen*, vol. 2: *Werke, Kontexte, Ensembles*, ed. by U. Schütte, H. Locher, K. Niehr, J. Sander, X. Stolzenburg, Petersberg 2019, pp. 138–145.

Pinakothek, 2.12 x 4m).⁵¹ To this group we should add numerous examples of carved altarpieces with painted wings; for instance retables by Hans

51 *Altarpiece of the Magi* (“*Dombild*”) by Stefan Lochner: F.G. Zehnder et al., *Stefan Lochner, Meister zu Köln. Herkunft, Werke, Wirkung*, exh. cat., Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne 1993; W. Schmid, “Stefan Lochners ‘Altar der Stadtpatron’. Zur Geschichte eines kommunalen Denkmals im heiligen Köln,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 58, 1997, pp. 257–284; R. Schumacher-Wolfgarten, “‘Altar der Stadtpatronen’? Zum Bildsinn des Lochner Altares im Dom zu Köln,” *Das Münster* 52, 1999, pp. 52–65; J. Chapuis, *Stefan Lochner: Image Making in Fifteenth-Century Cologne*, Turnhout 2004; E.M. Comes, *Ein Garten Eden. Die Pflanzen auf Stefan Lochners Altar der Stadtpatronen*, Berlin 2013. *The Church Fathers Altarpiece* by Michael Pacher: P. Halm, *Michael Pacher: Der Kirchenväter-Altar*, Stuttgart 1957; G. Goldberg, “Zu Michael Pachters Kirchenväteraltar in der Alten Pinakothek,” *Pantheon* 37, 1979, pp. 263–267; L. Madersbacher, “Ceci n’est pas un tableau. Pachters Kirchenväteraltar als inszeniertes Paradoxon,” in: *De re artificiosa. Festschrift für Paul von Naredi-Rainer*, eds. L. Madersbacher, Th. Stephan, Regensburg 2010, pp. 283–298. See also in **general studies on Pacher**: N. Rasmø, *Michael Pacher*, (Munich 1969), London 1971; M.J. Liebmann, *Die deutsche Plastik 1350–1550*, pp. 182–229; R. Salvini, “La pittura dell’alta Italia e la formazione artistica di Michael Pacher oraz Michael Pacher Jugendzeit,” in: his, *Medioevo nordico e Medioevo mediterraneo. Raccolta di scritti*, ed. by M. Salvini, Firenze 1987, pp. 59–96 and 241–249; M. Evans, “Appropriation and application: The significance of the sources of Michael Pacher’s altarpieces,” in: *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, ed. by P. Humfrey, M. Kemp, Cambridge 1990, pp. 106–128; M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer...*, pp. 330–332; P. Thurmman, *Symbolsprache und Bildstruktur. Michael Pacher, der Trinitätsgedanke und die Schriften des Nikolaus von Kues*, Frankfurt a.M. 1987; Ch.S. Wood, “Michael Pacher and the fate of the altarpiece in Renaissance Germany,” *Res: anthropology and aesthetics* 15, 1988, pp. 89–104; A. Rosenauer, “Michael Pacher und Italien. Beobachtungen zu einigen seiner Bildkompositionen,” *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 50, 1997, pp. 119–130; *Michael Pacher und sein Kreis. Ein Tiroler Künstler der europäischen Spätgotik 1498–1998 / Michael Pacher e la sua cerchia. Un artista tirolese nell’Europa del Quattrocento, 1498–1998*, ed. by A. Rosenauer, C. Plieger, exh. cat., Augustiner-Chorherrenstift, Neustift, Brixen, Bolzano/Bozen 1998; *Michael Pacher und sein Kreis. Ein Tiroler Künstler der europäischen Spätgotik, 1498–1998*, (symposium: Bruneck, 1998), ed. by A. Rosenauer, C. Plieger, Bozen/Bolzano 1999; L. Schultes, *Die gotischen Flügelaltäre Oberösterreichs*, vol. I: *Von den Anfängen bis Michael Pacher*, Weitra 2002; I. Trattner, “Michael Pacher. Ein Tiroler an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Renaissance,” in: *Künstler, Dichter, Gelehrte*, ed. by U. Müller, W. Wunderlich, M. Springeth, Konstanz 2005, pp. 153–176; H. Hensle-Wlasak, *Michael Pacher. La vida de un artista de dimensión europea*, in: *Durero y Cranach. Arte y humanismo en la Alemania del Renacimiento*, ed. by F. Checa, exh. cat., Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid 2007, pp. 127–147; G. Bonsanti, “Aggiornamenti su Michael Pacher,” *Paragone* 63, 2012, no. 747, pp. 3–30; S. Pesce, “La prospettiva in Michael Pacher,” in: *Aldèbaran. Storia dell’arte*, ed. by S. Marinelli, Verona 2012, pp. 37–54; *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, vol. 2, pp. 533–535; L. Madersbacher, *Michael Pacher. Zwischen Zeiten und Raumen*, Bozen 2015, pp. 64–67, 102–103 and 182–209. *Altarpiece of St. Lawrence from Sankt Lorenzen*: L. Madersbacher, *Michael Pacher. Zwischen Zeiten und Raumen*, pp. 35–48, 127–143 (with full literature).

Multscher such as *The Altarpiece from Sterzing* (1456–1458, Sterzing, Multscher-Museum, the original height was 12 meters); and *The Altarpiece from Wurzach* (1427, Berlin, Staatliche Museum, Gemäldegalerie; original dimensions 2.8 x 9m)⁵² [fig. 113], or works by the aforementioned Michael Pacher: *The Altarpiece of St. Lawrence* from St. Lorenzen, near Bruneck (1460s, central part c. 2 x 6m; Munich, Alte Pinakothek and Vienna, Belvedere) and and the *St. Wolfgang Altarpiece* (1471–1481, the corpus, predella and the crown 10,88 x 6,60 m; Sankt Wolfgang im Salzkammergut, pilgrimage church of St. Wolfgang) [figs. 292–294].⁵³

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- 52 **Hans Multscher, his workshop, and the altarpieces from Sterzing and Wurzach:** U. Söding, “Hans Multschers Sterzinger Altar,” *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 3.F., 40, 1989, pp. 35–101; U. Söding, *Hans Multscher. Der Sterzinger Altar*, Bozen 1991; U. Söding, “Hans Multschers Wurzacher Altar. Zusammenfassung,” in: *Flügelaltäre des späten Mittelalters*, ed. H. Krohm, E. Oellermann, Berlin 1992, pp. 123–126; I. Dietrich, *Hans Multscher: plastische Malerei – malerische Plastik. Zum Einfluss der Plastik auf die Malerei der Multscher-Retabel*, Bochum 1992; M. Tripps, *Hans Multscher. Meister der Spätgotik. Sein Werk, seine Schule, seine Zeit*, exh. cat., Leutkirch 1993; M. Tripps, “Neue Beobachtungen und Erkenntnisse zu verlorenen Altarretabeln von Hans Multscher,” *Pantheon* 52, 1995, pp. 4–17; *Hans Multscher. Bildhauer der Spätgotik in Ulm*, ed. by B. Reinhardt, M. Roth, exh. cat., Ulmer Museum, Ulm 1997; U. Möhrle, *Hans Multscher. Ein kunsthistorisches Konstrukt des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts? Rekonstruktionsversuch einer suddeutschen Bildhauerkarriere des Spätmittelalters*, dissertation, University of Vienna 2006; E. Zolda, *Die Flügelmalereien des Sterzinger Altarretabels im stilkritischen und lokalhistorischen Kontext*, dissertation, University of Vienna 2011.
- 53 **Altarpiece in Sankt Wolfgang by Michael Pacher: Der Pacher-Altar in St. Wolfgang.** *Untersuchung, Konservierung und Restaurierung*, ed. by M. Koller, N. Wirbial, Vienna 1981; M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer...*, p. 332; M. Koller, *Der Flügelaltar von Michael Pacher in St. Wolfgang*, (Studien zu Denkmalschutz und Denkmalpflege 18), Vienna–Cologne–Weimar 1998; *Meisterwerke der gotischen Bildschnitzkunst. Die Altäre von St. Wolfgang und Kefermarkt*, ed. by D. Schönemann, Klagenfurt 1998; B. Reichenauer, *Der Altar zu St. Wolfgang von Michael Pacher*, Vienna–Munich 1998; K. Herbers, “St. Wolfgang und die europäischen Pilgerfahrten des späten Mittelalters,” in: *Michael Pacher und sein Kreis...*, (exh. cat.), pp. 113–119; L. Schultes, *Die gotischen Flügelaltäre Oberösterreichs*, Weitra 2002; Ch.N. Opitz, “Die Narrativisierung des Architekturbildes im Michael Pachers St. Wolfgang Altar,” in: *Gotik-Schätze Oberösterreich*, (symposium: Linzer Schloss, 2002), ed. by L. Schultes, Linz 2003, pp. 271–290; R. Kahsnitz, *Die großen Schnitzaltäre. Spätgotik in Süddeutschland, Österreich, Südtirol*, Munich 2005 (English edition: *Carved Splendor: The Late Gothic Altarpieces in Southern Germany, Austria and South Tirol*, London 2006); A. Prater, “Überlegungen und Fragen zu Michael Pachers ‘Altarretabel von St. Wolfgang,’” in: *KunstKritikGeschichte. Festschrift für Johann Konrad Eberlein*, ed. by J. Aufreiter, G. Reisinger, E. Sobieczky, C. Steinhardt-Hirsch, Berlin 2013, pp. 189–216; L. Madersbacher, *Michael Pacher. Zwischen Zeiten und Raumen*, pp. 87–93, 210–274 (with full literature).



Fig. 111: Netherlandish painter (the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula?), *Triptych of the Descent from the Cross*, copy of a lost original, made by the Master of Flémalle and his assistants in the workshop of Robert Campin (c. 1430), Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, acc.no. WAG 1178



Fig. 112: Rogier van der Weyden and his workshop, *The Last Judgment*, c. 1450–1451, Beaune, Musée de l'Hôtel-Dieu



Fig. 113: Master of the Landsberg Altarpiece (Hans Multscher or a painter from his workshop), wing from *The Langsberg Altarpiece (The Wurzach Altarpiece)*, 1437, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie

The large, at times monumental format of the work was due to the distance from which the altarpiece was intended to be viewed. Most commonly the altarpieces were seen by the faithful from afar, placed in the choir, inaccessible to the lay crowd. These viewing conditions dictated artistic choices. The panels were filled with figures, big enough to be legible from a distance, whilst the colours were vivid, saturated, at times even gaudy. The golden background only enhanced their legibility. The background was not to symbolise the sacred, the divine and otherworldly light, or at least this was not its primary function, but it allowed the figures to be highlighted and brought them optically closer to the viewers. The monumental work had to be clear, with well-defined figures and legible narrative content.

These principles guided the composition of *The Triptych of the Last Judgment* by Rogier van der Weyden in the chapel at the hospital in Beaune, which was seen from a large distance by the sick lying in beds by the side walls of the room [fig. 114]. By contrast, its counterpart – *The Last Judgment* by Hans Memling – designed for a smaller space: a private, rather shallow chapel of the church in Badia Fiesolana, and could therefore include numerous smaller figures, shown

against a multicolour, not golden, background. The artist gilded only the space behind the figure of Christ: the Judge, to set Him apart from other, smaller elements of the composition [fig. 115].⁵⁴ There was no need to introduce a golden surface in the *Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck, as it functioned in the narrow context of a chapel in St. John's Church (today St. Bavo's Cathedral) in Ghent, and could only be seen from close up, and slightly from below. Consequently, the large figures of Christ, the Virgin, John the Baptist, the angels and Adam and Eve seen in the upper register; whilst the lower section includes a vast panorama crowded with small figures in a landscape. Moreover, because of the constrained space of the chapel in the original location, the altarpiece could not have had fully open wings; after being opened these were positioned diagonally in relation to the central part [figs. 116–117]. This created an effect of surrounding the viewer-believer with images from three sides, close to the effect of frescoes on the walls. In this retable, the gold is used only behind the main figures in the upper register of the central panel, to emphasise the inscriptions that define and characterise them.

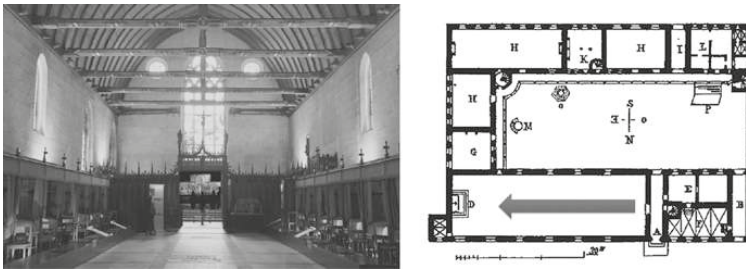


Fig. 114: *Last Judgment Triptych* by Rogier van der Weyden in the chapel at the hospital hall in Hôtel-Dieu, Beaune, reconstruction of the original location

54 *The Last Judgment Altarpiece (The Beaune Altarpiece)* by Rogier van der Weyden: N. Veronée-Verhaegen, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Beaune*, (Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux au quinzième siècle), Brussels 1973; N. Verhaegen, "Le retable de Beaune: élaboration et collaboration," in: *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture: colloque IV*, 1981, ed. by R. Van Schoute, D. Hollanders-Favart, Louvain-la-Neuve 1982, pp. 11–15; De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 17; A. Châtelet, *Rogier van der Weyden. Problèmes...*, pp. 156–161; his, *Rogier van der Weyden / Rogier de le Pasture*, pp. 76–85; S. Kemperdick, *Rogier van der Weyden 1399/1400–1464*, (Meister der niederländischen Kunst), Cologne 1999, new edition: 2007, pp. 65–71 (hereinafter referred to as Kemperdick Rogier 1999/2007), in English: *Rogier Van Der Weyden*, Masters of Netherlandish Art, Cologne 1999, new edition: Innovative Logistics Llc 2013; J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer, "A Note on the Original Disposition of the Ghent Altarpiece and the Beaune Polyptych," *Oud Holland* 117, 2004, no. 3/4, pp. 107–118; L. Campbell, "The New Pictorial Language of Rogier van der Weyden," in: Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier* 2009, pp. 32–61, esp. 55–57; G. Steyaert, R. Billinge, "The Beaune 'Last Judgement': Sorting out Rogier van der Weyden and His Assistants," in: *Technical studies*



Fig. 115: *Last Judgment Triptych* by Hans Memling and the chapel in the Badia Fiesolana Church

of paintings: problems of attribution (15th–17th centuries): papers presented at the nineteenth symposium for the study of underdrawing and technology in painting, ed. by A. Dubois, J. Couvert, T.-H. Borchert, Paris–Leuven–Bristol 2018, pp. 26–49. For the patronage of the donor of the altarpiece, **Chancellor Nicolas Rolin**, see H. Kamp, *Memoria und Selbstdarstellung. Die Stiftungen des burgundischen Kanzlers Nicolas Rolin*, Sigmaringen 1993; *La bonne étoile des Rolin: Mécénat et efflorescence artistique dans Bourgogne du XV^e siècle*, ed. by B. Maurice-Chabard, exh. cat., Musée Rolin, Autun 1994; *La splendeur des Rolin: Un mécénat privé à la cour de Bourgogne*, ed. by B. Maurice-Chabard et al., Paris 1999, pp. 67–90; M.-Th. Berthier, J.-Th. Sweeney, *Le chancelier Rolin, 1376–1462: Ambition, pouvoir et fortune en Bourgogne*, Prècy-sous-Thil 1998; M.-Th. Berthier, J.-Th. Sweeney, *Guigone de Salins 1403–1470: Une femme de la Bourgogne médiévale*, Beaune 2003; L.D. Gelfand, “Piety, Nobility and Posterity: Wealth and the Ruin of Nicolas Rolin’s Reputation,” *Journal of Historians of the Netherlandish Art* 1, 2009. (www.jhna.org/index.php/volume-1-issue-1). **The Last Judgment Altarpiece by Hans Memling in Gdańsk/Danzig:** J. Bialostocki, *Les musées de Pologne: Gdańsk, Kraków, Warszawa. Les primitifs flamands: Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux au quizième siècle*, Brussels 1966, pp. 94–116; his, “Modes of Reality and Representation of Space in Memling’s Donor Wings of the Last

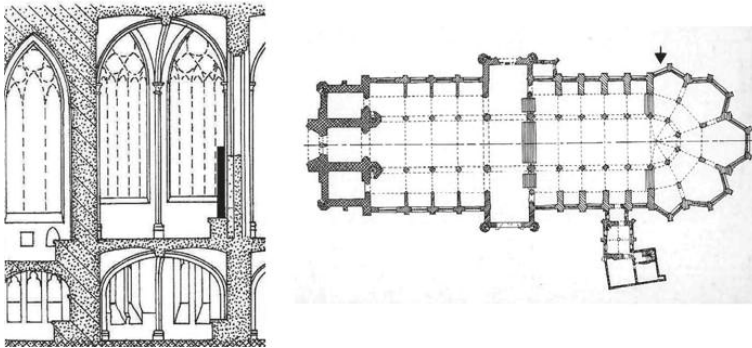


Fig. 116: Location of the *Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck in the Collegiate Church of St. John (today St. Bavo's Cathedral) in Ghent



Fig. 117: *Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck, showing two spatially possible openings. The first: with the upper wings positioned at an angle (according to Justus van Asperen de Boer); the second: with the diagonal positioning of all the wings open (based on the example of an arrangement of a modern replica in a chapel of St. Bavo's Cathedral in Ghent)

Judgement Triptych," in: *Essays in Northern European Art Presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. by A.-M. Logan, Doornspijk 1983, pp. 38–42; B.G. Lane, "The Patron and the Pirate: The Mystery of Memling's Gdańsk 'Last Judgment,'" *The Art Bulletin* 73, 1991, pp. 623–640; T.-H. Borchert, *Untersuchungen zum Frühwerk des Malers Hans Memling*, dissertation, University of Bonn 1994, pp. 91–112; P. Nuttall, "The Patrons of Chapels at the Badia di Fiesole," *Studi di storia dell'arte* 3, 1992, pp. 97–112; M. Rohlmann, *Auftragskunst und Sammlerbild. Altniederländische Tafelmalerei im Florenz des Quattrocento*, Alfter 1994, pp. 41–49; M.W. Ainsworth, "Hans Memling as a Draughtsman," in: *Hans Memling: Essays*, ed. by D. De Vos, Ghent 1994, pp. 78–87; C. Périer-d'Ieteren, "La technique de Memling et sa place dans l'évolution de la peinture flamande de XV^e siècle," in: *Hans Memling: Essays...*, pp. 67–77; D. De Vos, *Hans Memling. The Complete Work*,



Fig. 118: Hans Memling, *The Triptych of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist*, 1474–1479, Bruges, Sint-Janshospitaal – open and closed



Fig. 119: Hospital of St. John in Bruges, the view of the exterior and the inside of the chapel with *The Triptych of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist* by Hans Memling

Antwerp 1994 (also in English, French and German), cat. no. 4 (hereinafter referred to as De Vos *Memling* 1994); D. De Vos, *Hans Memling*, exh. cat., Groeningemuseum, Bruges 1994, cat. no. 2; P. Nuttall, "Memling's 'Last Judgement,' Angelo Tani and the Florentine Colony at Bruges," in: *Polish and English Responses to French Art and Architecture: Contrasts and Similarities*, (conference, University of London, Birkbeck College, 1993), ed. by F. Amy-Lewis, London 1995, pp. 155–165; P. Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence: The Impact of Netherlandish Painting 1400–1500*, New Haven–London 2004, pp. 54–60; T.-H. Borchert, *Memling – leven en werk*, in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *De portretten van Memling*, exh. cat., Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid – Groeningemuseum, Bruges – The Frick Collection, New York 2005, Ghent–Amsterdam 2005, pp. 22–26 (in English: *Memling and the Art of Portraiture*, London 2005); J. Flik, J. Olszewska-Świetlik, *Tryptyk 'Sąd Ostateczny' Hansa Memlinga z Muzeum Narodowego w Gdańsku. Technologia i technika malarska*, Toruń 2005, pp. 16–33; M. Faries, "The Underdrawing of Memling's Last Judgment Altarpiece in Gdansk," in: *Memling Studies*, (Proceedings of the international colloquium, Bruges 1994), ed. by H. Verougstraete, R. van Schoute, M. Smeyers, Leuven 1997, pp. 243–259; B.G. Lane, *Hans Memling: Master Painter in Fifteenth-Century Bruges*, Turnhout 2009, pp. 129–135 cat. no. 29 (hereinafter referred to as Lane *Memling* 2009); B. Ridderbos, "Il trittico con il 'Giudizio Universale' di Hans Memling e il 'Trittico Portinari' di Hugo van der Goes," in: *Firenze e gli antichi Paesi Bassi 1430–1530: dialoghi tra artisti: da Jan van Eyck a Ghirlandaio, da Memling a Raffaello...*, ed. by B.W. Meijer, exh. cat., Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence 2008, pp. 38–65; A. Ziembra, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 444–448, 463–464, 545–551; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Memling: Rinascimento fiammingo*, exh. cat., Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome 2014, cat. no. 1; A. Ziembra, "Sąd Ostateczny Hansa Memlinga – zagadki badawcze / The Last Judgment by Hans Memling: Research Mysteries," in: *Sąd: "Sąd Ostateczny" Hansa Memlinga / Judgment. "The Last Judgment" by Hans Memling*, ed. by A. Nowakowski, Gdańsk–Warsaw–Cracow 2016, pp. 71–99; B. Ridderbos, M. Faries, "Hans Memling's Last Judgement in Gdańsk: technical evidence and creative process," *Oud Holland* 130, 2017, no. 3/4, pp. 57–82 (an important polemic against the controversial and clearly erroneous hypothesis of a double Van der Weyden's/Memling's authorship of the work, propagated expansively by Iwona Szmelter from the Conservation Faculty of the Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw: see I. Szmelter, T. Ważny, "Interdisciplinary approach to the identification and authorship of 'The Last Judgement triptych' from the National Museum in Gdańsk attributed to Hans Memling," in: *The Heritage Wood: Research & Conservation in the 21st century*, Warsaw 2013, pp. 173–174 (republished by the Springer Verlag 2016); I. Szmelter, L. Cartechini, A. Romani and L. Pezzati, "Multi-criterial Studies of the Masterpiece The Last Judgement, Attributed to Hans Memling, at the National Museum of Gdańsk (2010–2013)," in: *Science and Art: The Painted Surface*, ed. by A. Sgamellotti, B. G. Brunetti, C. Milani, Cambridge 2014, pp. 230–251; I. Szmelter, Ph. Walter, H. Rousseliere, "New Information Provided by Multidisciplinary and Combined Studies, Including Radiography, XRD and XRF, of the triptych the Last Judgement from National Museum in Gdańsk: Rogier van der Weyden and Hans Memling co-authorship," *Opuscula Musealia* 23, 2015, pp. 61–73; I. Szmelter, "The impact of new data for identification and authorship: the case of The Last Judgement, triptych from the National Museum in Gdańsk, a Northern Renaissance work, by Rogier van der Weyden and Hans Memling," *Technè* 43, 2016, pp. 85–89); *Sąd Ostateczny Hansa Memlinga. Losy, prawo, symbole*, (conference Gdańsk 2018), ed. by J. Kamiń, B. Mozejko, J. Zajadło, K. Zeidler, Gdańsk 2019.

The Triptych of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist by Memling (1474–1479, Bruges, Memlingmuseum)⁵⁵ [fig. 118] was the retable of the high altar in the hospital church of St. John in Bruges – a famous congregation in Bruges, which enjoyed the great prestige of being an “ancient” charitable institution [fig. 119]. Founded in 1188, it was one of three *gasthuisen*, or hospices, run by the city. The fame of the congregation stirred political turmoil over who should oversee it. In 1459, it gradually came under the tutelage of the bishop of Tournai, and at this time the nuns and friars began to follow the Augustinian rule. Since 1463, the bishop and the city jointly oversaw the staff and the finances of the congregation. In 1473/74, the construction of the new choir of the hospital’s church began, and was concluded in 1477, the year of its consecration by the Bishop Ferry de Clugny. The commission of the retable, surely with support of the city and the bishop, was private, financed by the nuns and friars from the board of the congregation. Their full-figure portraits shown in the pose of adoration are included in the same space as the figures of saints: the figures stand or kneel under the arcades with tracery in a stone building, which gives the illusion of being an actual church, the interior of the hospital’s chapel. We see the donors kneeling and praying, protected by their saintly patrons: James the Great, Anthony Abbot, Agnes and Clare. There are images of the elders of the board of the hospital: Master Antheunis Seghers (died 1475); the treasurer Jacob Ceuninc (died 1490); the prioress Agnes Casembrood (died 1489), and the sister-intendant Clare van Hulsen (died 1479). The subject of their adoration is not visible when the wings are shut. Only when open does the altarpiece reveal the group to whom they direct their prayers. Through the

55 *Triptych St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist* by Hans Memling: V.J. Hull, *Hans Memling’s Paintings for the Hospital of Saint John in Bruges*, New York 1981; De Vos *Memling* 1994, no. 31; D. De Vos, *Hans Memling*, exh. cat., Groeningemuseum Brugge, Bruges 1994, cat. no. 13; T.-H. Borchert, “Memling – leven en werk,” in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *De portretten van Memling*, pp. 11–14, here pp. 28–32; Lane *Memling* 2009, chapter 9.II and cat. no. 10; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 553–554; N.F.H. O’Hear, *Contrasting Images of the Book of Revelation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Art. A Case Study in Visual Exegesis*, Oxford 2011, pp. 87–103; L.F. Jacobs, *Opening Doors: The Early Netherlandish Triptych Reinterpreted*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park 2012, pp. 172–177. T.-H. Borchert, “The Beginnings of Hans Memling’s Professional Work in Bruges and the Impact of His Early Commissions / Początki kariery Hansa Memlinga w Brugii i znaczenie wczesnych zamówień dla jego twórczości,” in: *Sąd. “Sąd Ostateczny” Hansa Memlinga / Judgment. “The Last Judgment” by Hans Memling*, ed. A. Nowakowski, Gdańsk 2016, pp. 49–68.

rhetorical “unveiling of the inside” the donors become part of a *sacra conversazione* – a vision of the saints in the Heavenly Jerusalem, in the New Solomon’s Temple, depicted as a hall with a colonnade. At the same time, the altarpiece rigorously divides the heavenly and terrestrial realms. Thus, the triptych became a means to glorify the local patricians – Seghers, Ceuninc, Casembrood, or van Hulsen – involved in a pious act of overseeing the famous hospital and the life of the elite brotherhood.

The triptych combines three pictorial modes. Closed, it shows on the versos of the wings the grand, group portrait of the donors. When open, the viewer sees the narrative: on the left wing there are scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist, with his beheading as the main scene, and on the right the vision of St. John the Evangelist on Patmos. Lastly, it is an iconic painting: the central panel shows the Virgin and Child, St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, Catherine and Barbara and music-making angels, and includes in the *Sacra Conversazione* the motif of the Mystical Marriage of St. Catherine to Christ. All these aspects – portrait, narrative painting and an icon with the patrons of the congregation – are displayed in a legible and well-designed fashion. The golden background would have been redundant, as the relatively small space of the chapel did not require a similar highlighting of the figures. In turn, the illusionistic architecture, with tracery and colonnade, painted on the surface of the closed retable visually enclosed the chapel. It framed the images of patron saints and donors, and at the same time it brought the figures forward. They benefit from the effect of the grand scale of the altarpiece. Moreover, they suggest a larger space than the one in which the viewer actually stands, whilst the stone architecture extends the chapel visually. When the triptych was open the location gained more air: the colonnaded hall seen in the main panel suggested a void, an opening to the outside world, the city and its suburbs. That is why the painter could have easily juxtaposed the hieratical, monumental figures of the two Saint Johns and the Virgin, which echoed the rhythm of the colonnade, with seated figures (the holy Virgins surrounding Mary occupying less space) contrasted with figures acting vividly and dynamically from the narratives on the wings. The effect of directing the viewer’s gaze deep into the scenery – into the vast cityscape and the landscape of Patmos – attracted the viewer and encouraged her/him to approach the surface of the altarpiece. Thus, it again activated the mobility of the observer. The entire optical construction of the work was modelled to fit within the potential of the actual interior of the chapel, which would have been familiar to the painter.



Fig. 120: Hans Memling, panels of the *Altarpiece from Nájera*, after 1490, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

Different factors conditioned the form of *The Altarpiece of Nájera*, one of the last works by Memling [fig. 120].⁵⁶ The gigantic altarpiece from the Convent of Santa Maria la Real was commissioned in 1490, presumably by – or with the assistance of – merchants from Castile involved in the wool trade, who were active in the Netherlands and present in large number in Bruges. According to an eighteenth century source, the painting depicted the Assumption of the Virgin and

56 *Altarpiece from Nájera by Hans Memling*: P. Vandenbroeck, *Catalogus schilderijen 14de en 15de eeuw*, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp 1985, pp. 138–143; M.B. McNamee, “The Good Friday liturgy and Hans Memling’s Antwerp Triptych,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37, 1974, pp. 353–356; De Vos *Memling* 1994, no. 81; T.-H. Borchert, “Memling’s Antwerp ‘God the Father with Music-Making Angels,’” in: *Le dessin sous-jacent... Colloque X*, 1993 (1995), pp. 157–159; T.-H. Borchert in: *Bruges et la renaissance. De Memling à Pourbus*, ed. by M.P.J. Martens, exh. cat., Sint-Janshospitaal, Memlingmuseum, Bruges 1998 (also in English and Netherlandish), vol. 2, pp. 20–22; M.B. McNamee, *Vested Angels: Eucharistic Allusions in Early Netherlandish Paintings*, Leuven 1998, pp. 173–180; T.-H. Borchert, *Memling – leven en werk*, p. 39; Lane *Memling* 2009, chapters 5.I.C, 5.II.B, 5.II.Ca and no. 1; B.G. Lane, “Hans Memling: vita e opere,” in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Memling. Rinascimento fiammingo*, exh. cat., Scuderie del Quirinale Rome, Rome–Milan 2014, p. 34; P. Vandenbroeck, *De eeuw der Vlaamse Primitieven*, Leuven 2014, pp. 93–97; G. Van der Snickt et al., “Material analyses of ‘Christ with singing and music-making Angels,’ a late 15th-C panel painting attributed to Hans Memling and assistants: Part I. Non-invasive in situ investigations,” *Journal of Analytical Atomic Spectrometry* 26 (11) 2011 (DOI: 10.1039/c1ja10073d); G. Van der Snickt, Technical research on Hans Memling’s ‘Christ with Singing and Music-making Angels,’ lecture on-line, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJiXLp713h0>; 22 march 2017; B. Fransen, L. Longneaux, “The main altar of the Benedictine abbey church in Nájera,” in: *Proceedings of the Symposium Harmony in Bright Colours. Memling’s Christ with Singing and Music-making Angels Restored*, ed. by M. Ainsworth, D. Lampens and L. Klaassen, Antwerp 2017; B. Fransen, *Hans Memling’s Nájera Altarpiece: new documentary evidence*, “Burlington Magazine” 160, 2018, no. 1379, pp. 101–105. For the church in Nájera see: M. Cantera Montenegro, “Santa Maria la Real de Nájera: fundación y primeros tiempos,” *En la España Medieval* 2, 1982, pp. 253–274; J.L. Sáez Lerena, *Real Patronato de Santa Maria la Real de Nájera*, Nájera 2000, especially pp. 15–34; M. Cantera Montenegro, “La comunidad monástica de Santa María de Nájera durante la edad media,” *En la España Medieval* 36, 2013, pp. 232–241.

Saints Vitalis, Agricola, Prudentius, Benedict; and since the convent was dedicated to the Virgin Queen of Heaven –it probably also showed the *Coronation*. From the altarpiece, three panels survive in a fragmentary state: *Christ Blessing* and two panels with *The Angelic Choir* (Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten). In total, they measure over 1.65 x 6.70m, therefore the entire altarpiece must have been truly gigantic: *The Assumption of the Virgin* depicted below the surviving panels must have been three or four times higher to adhere to the proportions. Therefore, the entire retable was at least 6–7 meters high and was larger than *The Ghent Altarpiece*. It should be imagined as decorating the interior of the Spanish church (built between 1422–1453), on the site of today’s Baroque altar [fig. 121]. It was seen from the perspective of a five-bay nave, at first from a great distance, which gradually diminished as the faithful approached the altar. The great distance forced Memling to include the golden background behind the proportionately small (though in reality large-scale) figures of angels, accompanying the monumental figure of Christ-God. Again, gold was used to bring forward and highlight the figures. It is not known if there was gold in the central panel showing the Assumption of the Virgin, but this possibility should not be discarded: in the painting by Michel Sittow, now in Washington (National Gallery of Art), thought to be based on Memling’s composition [fig. 122], the Virgin is seen against a reflective, white drapery, held by the angels, but behind her is a large section of a golden heaven.



Fig. 121: Interior of the church of the monastery of Santa Maria Real de Nájera; present-day view with Baroque altarpiece



Fig. 122: Michel Sittow, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1500, Washington, The National Gallery of Art

The local Spanish (though created by Netherlandish or German artists) *retablos*,⁵⁷ were seen from the line that divided the choir from the space for the laity. Even though they were displayed inside the presbytery, access to them was easier since they were viewed at a reduced distance, placed after the liturgical choir (*coro, trascoro*), and before the actual altar sanctuary (*sagrario*) [fig. 451]. Therefore, despite the monumental scale of the retables, which filled the entire wall of the presbytery, the forms and figures in the

57 J. Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table: The Development of the Painted Retable in Spain, 1350–1500*, New York 1989. See also: B.G. Proske, *Castillian Sculpture: Gothic to Renaissance*, New York 1951; A. Durán Sanpere, J. Ainaud de Lasarte, *Escultura gótica*, (Ars Hispaniae 7), Madrid 1956; F. Checa Cremades, *Pintura y escultura del Renacimiento en España, 1450–1600*, Madrid 1983; C.J. Ara Gil, “Escultura en Castilla y León en la época de Gil Siloe,” in: *Gil de Siloe y la escultura de su época*, (congress: Burgos 1999), ed. by J. Yarza Luaces, A.C. Ibáñez Pérez, Burgos 2001, pp. 145–188; F. Español i Bertran, “La escultura tardogótica en la Corona de Aragón,” in: *Gil de Siloe...*, pp. 287–333; A.M. Arias de Cossío, *El arte del Renacimiento español*, Madrid 2009.

individual panels could be smaller, and the entire structure could be designed of many smaller sections. This was the case of the main altarpiece in the Cathedral in Palencia, a multi-storey construction by Felipe Bigarny and Juan de Balmaseda with paintings by Juan de Flandes dated 1509–1519 [figs. 123–127].⁵⁸ The large sculpted figures, polychromed and gilded, are the main components of the composition that attract the gaze. From the painted sections only the scene of the Crucifixion, centrally placed in the original arrangement of the retable, (today in the Prado, Madrid) is composed frontally. The remaining narrative scenes are composed along different axes: the Annunciation, the Nativity, Christ's Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane; the *Ecce Homo*, Christ before Pilate, The Road to Calvary, the Entombment, the Resurrection, the Supper at Emmaus, the *Noli me tangere*. The episodes of the narrative are pierced with figures of saints. The altarpiece, a cult image, becomes at the same time an illustrated book to be read.



Fig. 123: Cathedral in Palencia, interior with a view of the liturgical choir (*coro*)

58 P. Silva Maroto, *La Crucifixión de Juan de Flandes*, Museo Nacional de Prado, Madrid 2006.

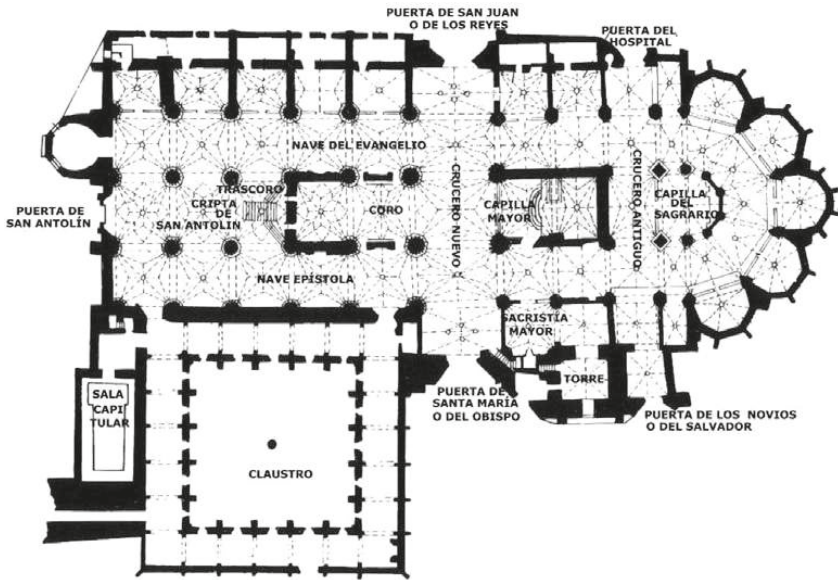


Fig. 124: Cathedral in Palencia, ground plan



Fig. 125: Retable of the main altar in the Cathedral in Palencia, construction and sculptures: Felipe Bigarny (Vigarny, Biguerny, de Borgoña), 1505–1507, and Juan de Balmaseda (Valmaseda) – the Crucifixion group of the top storey, 1519; painted panels: Juan de Flandes, 1509–1519

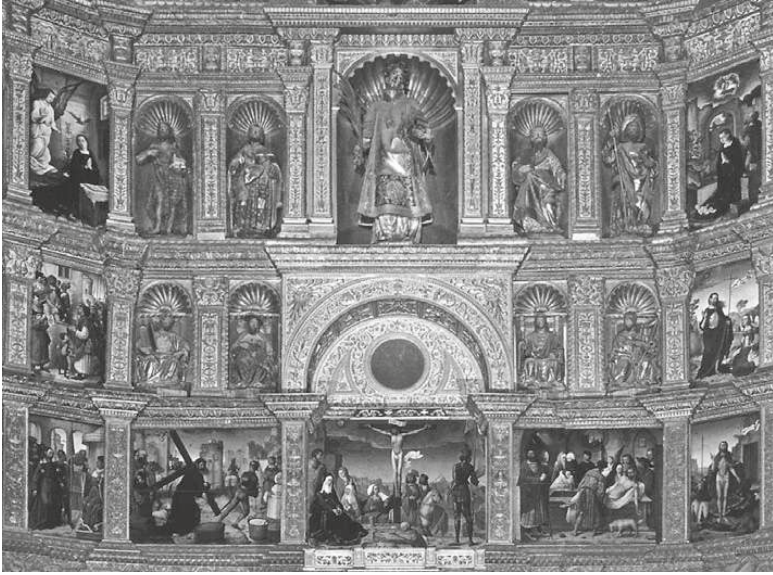


Fig. 126: Retablo of the main altar in Palencia Cathedral; central section showing the reconstruction of the location of the *Crucifixion* by Juan de Flandes from the Museo del Prado in Madrid



Fig. 127: Juan de Flandes, *Crucifixion* from the *retablo* of the main altar in the Cathedral in Palencia, 1509–1519, Madrid, Museo del Prado

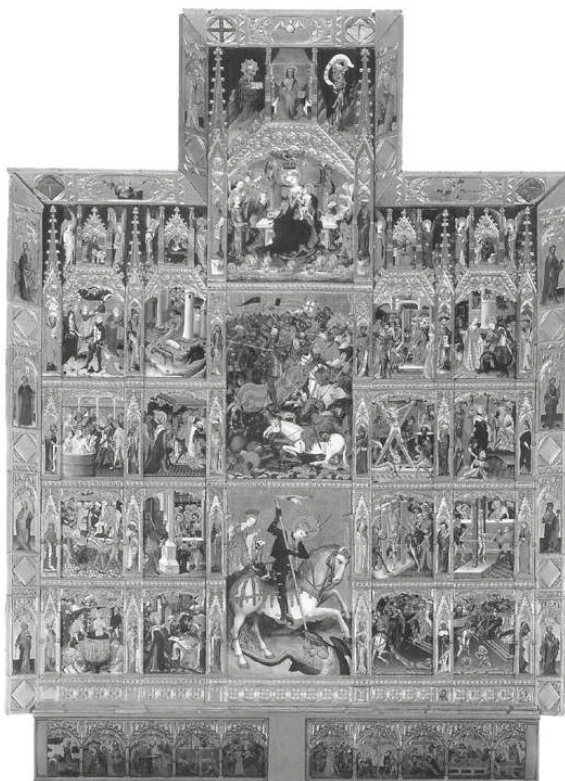


Fig. 128: Andrés Marçal de Sas (?), *The Altarpiece of St. George*, c. 1410–1420, London, The Victoria & Albert Museum (no. 1217-1864)

This principle guided the design of the Iberian *retablos* from the beginning. It is clear in an early example – *The Altarpiece of St. George* from 1410–1420, today at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London [fig. 128].⁵⁹ This is attributed to Andrés Marçal de Sas, a painter of German origins, active in Valencia, and measures 6.6 x 5.5m. Apart from the large paintings in the centre, which show St. George slaying the dragon, the triumph of James I of Aragon over the Moors, and the Virgin and Child surrounded by angels (captured in dynamic, narrative poses), the rest of the small panels arranged in five rows show small multiframe scenes. This *retablo* offers the viewer a visual reading of the complex and rich history of St. George as a knight, and, conceptually presented here as a role model for the conquering

59 C.M. Kauffmann, “The Altar-Piece of St. George from Valencia,” *Victoria & Albert Museum Yearbook* 2, 1970, pp. 65–100.

Spanish king. The altarpiece could be assembled from a number of small panels, because of its setting in a chapel, and not in the vast space of the church. It was commissioned by the Brotherhood of the Archers, that is the city militia, for the chapel of their guild in Valencia.

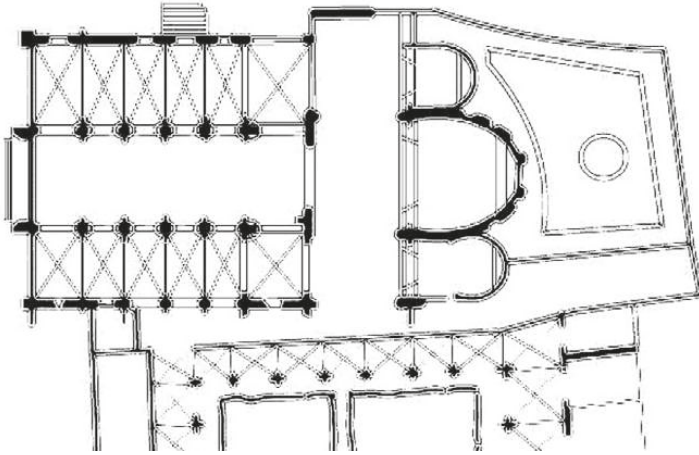


Fig. 129: Sé Velha Cathedral in Coimbra, ground plan



Fig. 130: Sé Velha Cathedral in Coimbra, interior

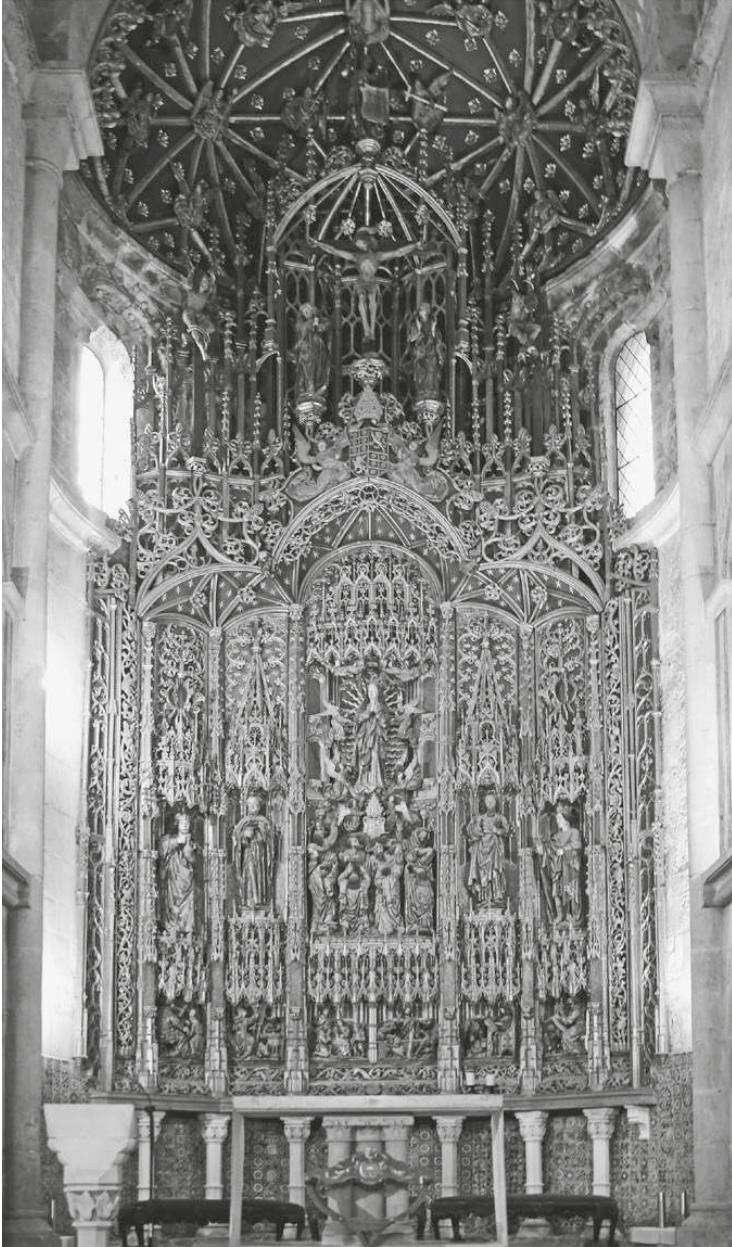


Fig. 131: Olivier de Gand (sculptures), Jean d'Ypres (polychromy), the altarpiece of the main altar in Sé Velha Cathedral, Coimbra, 1499–1501/1502

The composition and the viewing conditions of the entirely carved altarpieces in Iberia were slightly different. In these retables, narrative scenes played a lesser role. In Portuguese Coimbra, in the Cathedral of Sé Velha, a large, wooden, polychromed and gilded altarpiece was erected between 1499 and 1501/1502 [figs. 129–131]. It measures 15 meters in height and fills the entire space of the choir's apse. It was created, typically for Iberia, by Northern artists. Olivier de Gand (from Ghent)⁶⁰ carved the figures, subsequently polychromed by Jean d'Ypres. The altarpiece was commissioned by the Bishop Don Jorge d'Almeida (1483–1543). The construction of the retable consists of multi-canopied, multi-layered tracery with a vertical rhythm of pinnacles. Large, legible figures are embedded in its structure: the Crucifixion at the top, the Assumption of the Virgin above the group of angels in the middle, and individual figures of saints on the sides. At the bottom there is a frieze of small-scale narrative scenes. The work combines two visual registers: the presentation of large-scale figures and small, narrative reliefs below. Only the first register can be seen from afar. The faithful would enter the church through the western portal, distanced from the choir. S/he would see – this time without the barrier of the liturgical choir, absent in this structure – an intricate, luminous gilded web of tracery, and at first can distinguish in it only the large figures of the main scenes, and the individual saints. Only when the faithful approached the altar, could he or she read the narrative described in the reliefs at the base of the *retablo*. The drama of the viewing of the altarpiece was not limited to these effects. The different stages of viewing the retable – from the initial moment of entering the cathedral, through the gradual approach to the altar, to the position of the faithful before the choir where they would participate in the mass – are marked by the three coats-of-arms of the donor, repeated in the main vertical axis of the altar. The first one – the most elaborate – hangs high above the group of the Crucifixion and is legible upon entering the temple. The second one – which is humbler – is displayed below the Assumption of the Virgin, yet above the Apostles. The viewer notices it whilst walking down the nave, somewhere in its middle. The third coat-of-arm – the smallest – is placed low, at the base, where the priest celebrates the mass. This one can be seen only when standing directly before the altar.

60 **Olivier de Gand:** L. Reis Santos, "Olivier de Gand: sculpteur du XVI^e siècle au Portugal," in: *Miscellanea Prof. Dr. D. Roggen*, Antwerp 1957, pp. 229–247; F. Grilo, "A influência nórdica na escultura portuguesa no tempo de D. Manuel I. Olivier de Gand e sua oficina em Tomar," *Artis* 1, 2002, pp. 139–174.

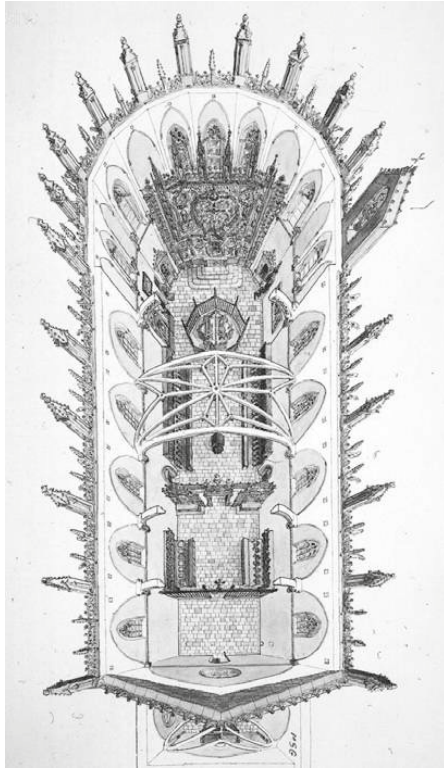


Fig. 132: Carthusian Church at Miraflores near Burgos, interior, drawing by Miguel Sabrino



Fig. 133: Gil de Siloe and Diego de la Cruz, main altarpiece in the Carthusian Church at Miraflores near Burgos, 1496–1499; general view showing the tomb of King John II of Castile and Isabella of Portugal, and a close-up view of the central part of the altarpiece



Fig. 134: Juan and Simon de Colonia, Carthusian Church at Miraflores near Burgos, 1454–1484

The *retablo* of the Carthusian Church at Miraflores near Burgos [figs. 132–134] was executed at roughly the same time as the altarpiece in the Cathedral of Sé Velha, between 1496 and 1499. The altarpiece, created by Gil de Siloé, a notable sculptor trained in the Netherlands,⁶¹ and by a local painter of polychromy called Diego de la Cruz, has a composition based on two modes – the presentation of monumental cult figures, and historic narrative described in small scenes, tightly displayed across the panel. In this case, the figures do not dominate the narratives but rather the two modes are clearly contrasted. The figures, designed to be venerated by the faithful, would have disappeared in the midst of the minute scenes and ornaments,

61 Gil de Siloe and the Charterhouse Miraflores: A.H. Wethey, *Gil de Siloe and His School: A Study of Late Gothic Sculpture in Burgos*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1936; B.G. Proske, *Castilian Sculpture...*, pp. 54–91; A. Durán Sanpere, J. Ainaud de Lasarte, *Escultura gótica*, pp. 341–355; M.J. Gómez Bárcena, *Escultura gótica funeraria en Burgos*, Burgos 1988; J. Yarza Luaces, *Gil de Siloe*, (Cuadernos de arte español 3), Madrid 1991; M.D. Teijeira Pablos, “Un ejemplo de iconografía marginal funeraria: la orla del sepulcro del infante Alfonso en la Cartuja de Miraflores,” *Reales sitios* 34, 1997, no. 133, pp. 35–43; M.J. Gómez Bárcena, “El sepulcro del infante Alfonso,” in: *Reales sitios* 34, 1997, no. 133, pp.189–205; J. Röhl,

if it had not been for their scale. The artist freely explored the *amor vacui* – the profusion of small forms. The Carthusian church – belonging to a poor, mendicant order – is not very spacious; indeed it is rather small in comparison with cathedrals and large abbeys. It has three entrances, from the front and the two sides. From the monastery the church was accessible through a side portal, which reduced the distance to the altarpiece. Moreover, in the middle of the church, between 1483 and 1493, Gil de Siloé carved a monumental tomb of the two benefactors of the church, King John II of Castile and his wife Isabella of Portugal [fig. 133]. The monument has a highly original ground plan, that of a star, and its angles, protruding into the space of the viewer, are decorated with numerous figures, and framed by lavish architectural decoration. The tomb's form forces the viewer to stop next to it and walk around it before continuing the walk towards the altar. The viewing distance of the monumental *retablo* is thus further shortened. Given this, the construction included many delicate forms, and its architectural composition might have been unsettled by the motif of the circular wreaths, encircling the scenes, and the large circle of angels, which frames the central Crucifixion.

Truly overwhelming, given its monumental scale, was the high altarpiece at the La Seo Cathedral in Saragossa (16 x 10m).⁶² Its construction was initiated in 1434 by Pere Johan (Pere Joan, died after 1447), and continued

“Burgos und Burgund. Zu Werken des Gil de Siloe,” in: *Gotische Architektur in Spanien*, (colloquium: Göttingen 1994), ed. by Ch. Freigang, Frankfurt a.M.1999, pp. 289–300; his, “Secular Sculpture for Learned Institutions in Spain,” in: *Secular Sculpture 1300–1550*, (conference: University of Leicester 1994), ed. by P. Lindley, T. Frangenberg, Stamford 2000, pp. 166–178; J. Yarza Luaces, *Gil Siloe. El Retablo de la Concepción en la Capilla del obispo Acuña*, Oviedo 2000; *Gil de Siloe y la escultura de su época*, (congress: Burgos 1999), ed. by J. Yarza Luaces, A.C. Ibáñez Pérez, Burgos 2001 (see especially J. Yarza Luaces, *El retablo mayor de la Cartuja de Miraflores*); J. Yarza Luaces, *La nobleza ante el rey. Los grandes linajes castellanos y el arte en el siglo XV*, Madrid 2003; J. Gómez-Bárcena, “La sociedad burgalesa y el arte gótico funerario,” in: *El arte gótico y el territorio burgalés*, Burgos 2006; J. Yarza Luaces, *La Cartuja de Miraflores*, vol. I: *Los sepulcros*, vol. II *El retablo*, (Cuadernos de Restauración de Iberdrola XIII), 2007; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 108–110; *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, s.v. *Siloe, Gil de*, p. 590.

62 **Pere Johan (Pere Joan) and the altarpiece in the Cathedral in Saragossa:** M.C. Lacarra Ducay et al., *El retablo mayor de San Salvador de Zaragoza*, Saragossa 2000; X. Barral i Altet, M.R. Manote, “Le sculpteur et l’œuvre en albatre au XV^e siècle: Pere Joan et le retable de la cathédrale de Saragosse,”



Fig. 135: Pere Johan (Pere Joan), Hans de Suabia (Hans Peter Danzer, Ans Piet d’Danso, Hans von Gmünd), Francí Gomar, main altarpiece in the Cathedral of La Seo in Saragossa, 1434–1483

between 1467 and 1474 by Hans de Suabia (Hans Peter Danzer, Ans Piet d’Danso, Hans von Gmünd), the sculptor from Schwäbisch-Gmünd;⁶³ the altarpiece was completed in 1483. It was carved in precious alabaster, imported from the local quarry in Gelsa and from Besalú, near Girona, located approximately 460 kilometres from Saragossa. When the funds for the construction shrank, some sculptures were carved in wood, and painted to imitate the stone. Presumably, the wooden models for the stone reliefs were used in this way, which, with the replenished funds, were substituted with sculptures in fine quality alabaster at a later stage. It is important to keep in mind that Pere Johan travelled widely (over 1000 kilometres) in the mid-1430s to locate stone of the highest quality. This proves the significance of the process of finding suitable materials to reflect the prestige of, and to enable, the execution of the designed form. It was not a coincidence that Hiëronymus Müntzer, a German humanist travelling in Spain in 1495, described the altarpiece in Saragossa with great esteem, stating that it was carved in unique white marble, magnificently gilded, and that there was no other altarpiece as equally precious and skilfully crafted in alabaster in all of Spain.⁶⁴

in: *Artistes, artisans et production artistique au Moyen Âge*, ed. X. Barral i Altet, Paris 1986–1990, vol. II (1987), pp. 575–582; for Pere Johan see also the following general surveys: M.R. Manote i Clivilles, “Guillem Sagrera i Pere Joan, dos artistes catalans al servei d’Alfons el Magnànim a la cort de Nàpols,” in: *Atti / XVI Congresso Internazionale di Storia della Corona d’Aragona, Napoli 1997*, eds. G. D’Agostino, G. Buffardi, Naples 2000, vol. II, pp. 1729–1743; E. Liaño Martínez, “Pere Johan entre el exemplum medieval y la estética clásica. El retablo mayor de la catedral de Tarragona,” *Goya* 282, 2001, pp.137–144.

63 **Hans de Suabia:** H. Kissling, *Künstler und Handwerker in Schwäbisch Gmünd 1300–1650*, Schwäbisch Gmünd 1995, p. 100; S.G. Lasheras, “Nuevas atribuciones al escultor cuatrocentista Ans Piet Danso, maestro defacer ymagines, documentado en Zaragoza entre 1467–1478,” *Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Nazar* 93, 2004, pp. 43–57; H.-W. Bächle, “‘Ans Piet Danso – Almanus ex Gamundia Suezie’. Hans Peter Danzer aus Schwäbisch Gmünd schuf den Hochaltar in der Alten Kathedrale La Seo in Saragossa, der ehemaligen Hauptstadt von Aragonien,” *Einhorn-Jahrbuch Schwäbisch Gmünd* 2006, pp. 121–132.

64 S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 198.

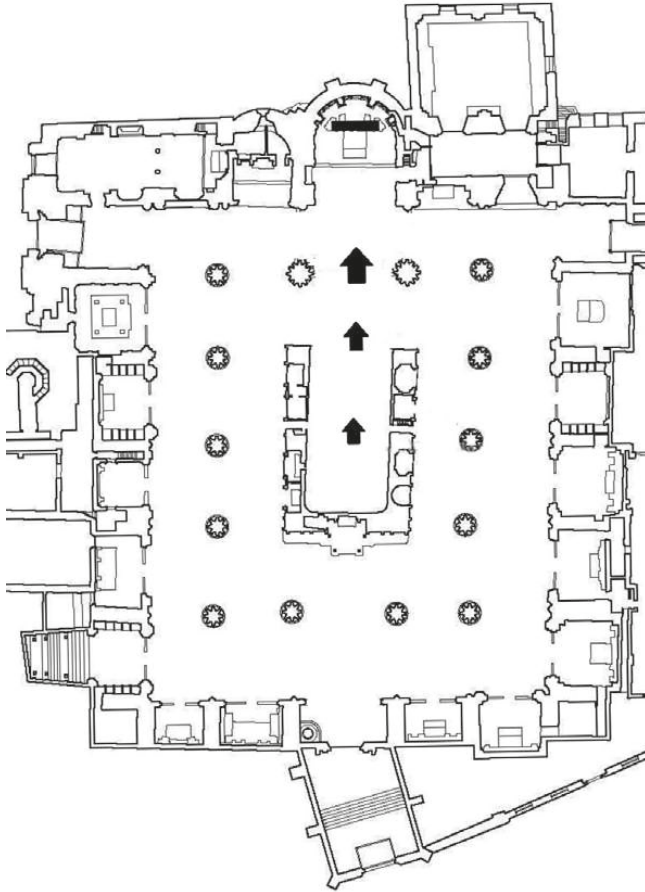


Fig. 136: La Seo Cathedral in Saragossa, ground plan with marked views of the altarpiece



Fig. 137: Jenaro Pérez Villaamil and Alfred Guesdon, *Main Altarpiece of La Seo Cathedral in Saragossa*, print, 1842

The altarpiece consists of a structure with canopies and pinnacles, executed before 1457 by another master, Francí Gomar,⁶⁵ and which takes up over a half of the wall; a sculptural tondo with the God the Father in the act of blessing (extracted from the altarpiece in 1473 and substituted by a circular window; today preserved in Museu Nacional de Arte de Catalunya in Barcelona), and three large-scale figurative groups – from the left: the Ascension, the Adoration of the Magi, the Transfiguration. The lower section (the predella-pedestal) contains reliefs with episodes from the lives of Sts. Lawrence and Valery, who were venerated locally in Saragossa. The entire wall with figures and tracery was seen at a rather close distance: either from the entrance to the choir or from the transept, or from the retrochoir in the middle of the cathedral (*coro, trascoro*) [fig. 136]. The intended viewpoint is approximated in the print by Jenaro Pérez de Villaamil and Alfred Guesdon in 1842 (Saragossa, Archivo Municipal) [fig. 137]. In order for the main figurative scenes to be visible from the choir, above the tramezzo, they had to be located on a very high base; and even with this solution when seated in the stalls, only the upper, architectural part of the retable could have been appreciated. This spatial distribution justifies the numerous delicate motifs and scenes, seen only from up close, and the emphasis on a few large-scale figures, mainly the frontal, erected Christ in the scenes of the Ascension and Transfiguration.

Therefore, the universally praised or stigmatized *horror vacui* of the Iberian *retablos* was not an arbitrary, artistic gesture dictated by style, but rather it resulted from a specified position of the viewer and her/his mobility inside the church. It always reflected the particular, local circumstances and directed the viewer according to the carefully thought-out principles. It was not the beholder who perceived the artwork, but the work itself motivated the viewer and forced her/ him to undertake specific actions.

65 **Francí Gomar:** R.S. Janke, “The Retable of Don Dalmau de Mur y Cervelló from the Archbishop’s Palace at Saragossa: a documented work by Francí Gomar and Tomás Giner,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 18, 1983, pp. 65–83; F. Fité i Llevot, “Franci Gomar y el nuevo coro del ‘Seu Vella’ de Lleida,” in: *Gil de Siloe y la escultura de su época*, pp. 559–572; D. Heim, *Rodrigo Alemán und die Toledaner Skulptur um 1500. Studien zum künstlerischen Dialog in Europa*, Kiel 2006, pp. 153–154.



Fig. 138: Master Michel of Augsburg, *The Altarpiece of St. Mary*, 1510–1517, Danzig/Gdańsk, Our Lady Church

Similar interactions took place in the North, in the hall churches and basilicas with ambulatories encompassing the choir. In *St. Mary's Altarpiece* in Our Lady Church in Gdańsk/Danzig by Master Michel of Augsburg (1507–1517) [figs. 138–140], it seems that even the back of the shrine was decorated with paintings.⁶⁶ The decoration included scenes from the Christological cycle (these do not survive; their dating and the issue of whether they were

66 The main altarpiece of St. Mary's Church in Gdańsk/Danzig: A. Woziński, "Michał z Augsburga – twórca ołtarza głównego z kościoła N.P. Marii w Gdańsku," *Sprawozdania / Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk* 105, 1987, pp. 61–67; J. von Bonsdorff, *Kunstproduktion und Kunstverbreitung im Ostseeraum des Spätmittelalters*, Helsinki-Helsingfors 1993, p. 121; A. Woziński, "Michał z Augsburga, Mistrz Paweł i epilog gotyckiej rzeźby gdańskiej," *Rocznik Historii Sztuki* 27, 2002; B. Noworyta-Kuklińska, *Triumphus Mariae Ecclesiae: retabulum ołtarza głównego kościoła Najświętszej Panny Maryi w Gdańsku*, Lublin 2003; A. Woziński, "Late Gothic Sculptured Retables in the Area between Danzig (Gdańsk), Elbing (Elbląg), Königsberg and Thorn (Toruń) (1450–1530)," in: *Malerei und Skulptur des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit in Norddeutschland....*, pp. 199–213; his, "Bildhauerei des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts," in: *Danziger Kunst*

later additions is therefore still debated): The Temptation of Christ; The Cleansing of the Temple; The Triumphal Entry; Christ and the Pharisees; Christ blessing the Children; The Healing of the Demon-Possessed; Christ and the Adulteress.⁶⁷ These scenes were linked to the panels on the verso of the fixed external wings (a retable has three pairs of wings, two of which are moveable: the internal and external wings, and the fixed ‘external wings proper’; unfortunately, the wings of this altarpiece are currently assembled erroneously), which combine the scenes from the Christological cycle with corresponding scenes from the Marian narrative that fill the remaining sections of the two pairs of the moveable wings, leading up to the Triumph of the Virgin in the central scene of the Coronation. The episodes take place after the Resurrection: Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, the *Noli me tangere*, Doubting Thomas, and Pentecost. The huge impact of the monumental retable resulted from the drawing of the viewer into the composition – through the series of sequential openings and the long narrative of the life of the Virgin – towards the final vision of her glory in the Coronation. On the other hand, the retable was open wing after wing on specific days, which motivated the viewer to walk around its entire structure in a kind of processional movement in which he or she could discover the scenes on the verso of the main corpus. Only then could the believer fully comprehend the Virgin’s role in the salvation of mankind, from the Incarnation to the moment of the Church’s foundation during Pentecost, with her as Mary-Ecclesia (which concluded the narrative, forming an analogy to the central moment of the Coronation, establishing her as the Queen of Heaven and the Queen of the Church).

vom 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert, ed. by T. Grzybkowska, Gdańsk 2004, pp. 119–144; B. Noworyta-Kuklińska, *Praedicatio tabularis. Obrazowe kazanie o tryumfie Maryi Eklezji na retabulum ołtarza głównego kościoła Mariackiego w Gdańsku*, Lublin 2006; A. Woźniński, *W świetle gwiazd. Sztuka i astrologia w Gdańsku w latach 1450–1550*, Gdańsk 2011, pp. 77–160; his, “Monochromatyczne obrazy na retabulum ołtarza głównego w kościele Mariackim w Gdańsku. Geneza i znaczenie,” in: *Procesy przemian w sztuce średniowiecznej. Przełom – regres – innowacja – tradycja. Studia z historii sztuki*, ed. by R. Eysymontt, R. Kaczmarek, Warsaw 2014, pp. 253–267; A. Woźniński, “Średniowieczne nastawy ołtarzowe, malarstwo i rzeźba w kościele Mariackim w Gdańsku,” in: A. Woźniński, A. Ziemia, F. Skibiński, A. Sobecka, *Kościół Mariacki w Gdańsku. Malarstwo i rzeźba*, ed. by J. Friedrich, Gdańsk 2019, pp. 19–65.

67 A. Woźniński, *Michał z Augsburga...*, p. 16.

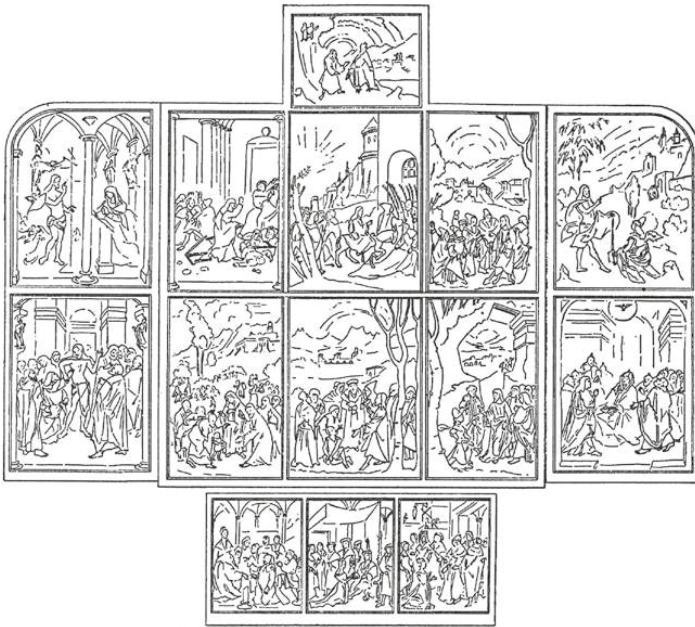


Fig. 139: *St. Mary's Altarpiece*, Our Lady Church, Danzig/Gdańsk, back side (after the reconstruction by Willy Drost)



Fig. 140: *St. Mary's Altarpiece*, Our Lady Church, Danzig/Gdańsk; reconstruction of the arrangement of the panels in the first opening (with the moveable external wings closed – see below) and the second opening (with the moveable external wings opened, and internal wings closed – see above) – after Willy Drost

To learn and to understand, one had to walk around the altarpiece, to glance at its verso. There, in the back of the choir, behind the altar, was where confessions traditionally took place, as did processions during the feast of Corpus Christi or Passion Sunday, or on any other festive procession involving the Holy Sacrament or reliquary. This is why numerous German altarpieces were decorated with images at their back. These were mostly non-narrative though not strictly iconic devotional images such as the Vera icon, the Crucifixion, the *Vir Dolorum*, Christ in a sarcophagus, or images of saints corresponding to the specific altarpiece, or, finally, with a painting of the Last Judgment as a reminder to those awaiting confession.⁶⁸ The altarpiece in Danzig is unusual, as its verso continues the narrative of the life of the Virgin, which is linked with the life of Christ. Thus, it forces the viewer/believer to walk around the altar to fulfil the act of reading the illustrated narrative and thereby fully comprehend why he/she should stand before the open altar and honour the Virgin, the patroness of Danzig and the universal Church.

68 R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, Petersberg 2009, p. 448. On decorated reverses of the altar chests – see: J. Tripps, *Rückseiten spätgotischer Retabel. Fragen zur Funktion, Form und Dekoration. Beitrag zu Ehren von Renate Kroos*, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich 2001, http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/volltextserver/5926/1/tripps_retabeln.pdf, pp. 1–7; J. Rosenfeld, “Malerische Retabel-Rückseiten. Prolegomena zu Bedingungen und Möglichkeiten des Abseitigen vornehmlich nordalpiner Kunst des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit,” in: *Kunst und Liturgie. Choranlagen des Spätmittelalters – ihre Architektur, Ausstattung und Nutzung*, ed. by A. Moraht-Fromm, Memmingen 2003, pp. 253–338; Ch.N. Opitz, “Die Heiligen hinter dem Altar. Überlegungen zu Gestaltung und Benutzung von Retabelrückseiten im Spätmittelalter,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 67, 2006, pp. 161–193. *Aus der Nähe betrachtet. Bilder am Hochaltar und ihre Funktionen im Mittelalter*, (colloquium Frankfurt a.M. 2015), ed. by J. Sander, S. Seeberg, F. Wolf, Frankfurt–Berlin 2016 (see especially: S. Wettekind, *Hinter dem Altar. Nutzungskonzepte vor und nach der Einführung von Altarretabeln*, pp. 23–37; Ch. N. Opitz, “...warum in der gothischen Zeit auch die Rückseiten der Altäre mit Bildern geschmückt worden seyen...” *Neue Antworten auf eine alte Frage*, pp. 38–48; J. Tripps, *Wandelbare Retabelrückseiten*, pp. 49–63); *Schaufenster des Himmels. Der Altenberger Altar und seine Bildausstattung*, ed. by J. Sander, exh. cat. Städel Museum, Frankfurt a.M., Berlin – Munich 2016.

III. ANIMATED THINGS: MANIPULATION AND HANDLING

III.1. Precious small objects

III.1.1. Small books

Hidden in the reserved collections of libraries and museums, and displayed only occasionally in exhibitions, fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts are known to us mostly through their reproductions. We rarely grasp the actual dimensions of these objects, provided in small font in catalogue entries, in millimetres or centimetres that do not correspond with our imagination and experience of scale. We do not distinguish between their tiny and huge formats, as we are accustomed to the standardised sizes of modern and contemporary books. But, indeed, the formats of old folios and volumes are dramatically different from those that we handle today.

Huge, large or medium sizes of c. 40 x 25, 30 x 20, or 25 x 15cm were reserved for liturgical books, festive prayer books, legal and administrative codices, didactic and moralising texts, practical handbooks, and above all for the chronicles and historiographic manuscripts, books about the crusades and the adventures of the crusaders, and chansons de geste. *Les Chroniques de Hainaut* – the three-volume *Chronicles of Hainaut* by Jacques de Guise and translated by Jean Wauquelin was commissioned in 1446, written in Mons in 1449 by Jacotin de Bois, and illuminated in Brussels c. 1449 and in Bruges in 1451–1468 (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9242–9244). It measured 42.3 x 28.8cm (the subsequent volumes: 44 x 31.2cm), and were amongst the largest format codices in the library of the Burgundian Dukes [fig. 141].⁶⁹ The frontispiece miniature of the *Chronicles*, created in the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden, captures

⁶⁹ *Chroniques de Hainaut* of Jean Wauquelin: Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier* 2009, cat. no. 9; *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, ed. by S. Marti, T.-H. Borchert, G. Keck, exh. cat., Historisches Museum Bern – Musea Brugge, Groeningemuseum, Bruges – Kusthistorisches Museum Vienna 2008–2010, Brussels 2009 (in German: *Karl der Kühne (1433–1477). Kunst, Krieg und Hofkultur*, Stuttgart 2008), cat. no. 131; P. Cockshaw, Ch. van den Bergen-Pantens. *Les Chroniques de Hainaut ou les ambitions d'un prince bourguignon*, Turnhout 2000; *Vlaamse Miniaturen 1404–1482*, eds. B. Bousmanne, Th. Delcourt, exh. cat., Bibliothèque National de France, Paris – Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, Brussels 2011, pp. 147–177, cat. no. 19



Fig. 141: Jacques de Guise, *Chroniques de Hainaut*, translated by Jean Wauquelin, vol. I, 1446–1449, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9242



Fig. 142: Rogier van der Weyden or his workshop, dedicatory illumination from the *Chroniques de Hainaut*, 1446–1448, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9242, fol. 1

well the large format of the volume [fig. 142]. Similarly, the codex of *The Deeds and Conquests of Alexander the Great*, or *Le Livre des Faits et de Conquestes d'Alexandre le Grand*, compiled from texts by Jean Wauquelin (Mons and Brussels 1447–1448; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 9342) measured 43.5 × 30cm.⁷⁰ Another manuscript, *Le Livre du gouvernement des proces* by Aegidius Romanus, had a similar folio format – 44.5 × 31cm, translated by Jean Wauquelin, executed in Mons and Bruges c. 1452 (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9043).⁷¹ The four-volume *History of Charles Martel*, written by David Aubert, and illuminated by Loyset Liedet and his workshop successors between 1467 and 1472 (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 6–9) measured

70 *Livre des Faits et de Conquestes d'Alexandre le Grand* by Jean Wauquelin: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, cat. no. 11; *Vlaamse Miniaturen 1404–1482...*, pp. 178–181, cat. no. 20.

71 *Livre du gouvernement des proces* by Aegidius Romanus translated by Jean Wauquelin: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, cat. no. 10; *Vlaamse Miniaturen 1404–1482...*, cat. no. 21

41 × 29cm.⁷² All the aforementioned examples were substantial, monumental, representative books, with content and illuminations designed to announce and visualise the splendour of ducal and dynastic power. The *Chronicles of Hainaut* narrate the story of the newly gained territory of the Burgundian country and discuss the genealogical lineage from the ancient Trojans, through the counts of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland, to Philip the Good. The *History of Charles Martel* proclaims the legitimisation of the sovereign power of the Burgundian dukes and their heirs, the ancient French monarchs, the Carolingians. As instruments of political propaganda, such display objects must have been *nomen omen* hefty!



Fig. 143: Jan van Eyck, *Madonna van der Paele*, 1434–1436, Bruges, Groeningemuseum, detail showing the prayer book

72 *Histoire de Charles Martel* by David Aubert: *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, cat. no. 130; *Vlaamse Miniaturen 1404–1482...*, cat. no. 61.

In comparison with these large-scale volumes, the private prayer books, significantly smaller in format, required unparalleled artistic precision and finesse of execution [fig. 143]. The minute scale was compensated for by the mastery of forms. Moreover, the minute format required a high level of artistry. It forced the artist to fill the limited surface of the folio with a multitude of motifs, whether figurative or purely ornamental; to demonstrate their skill, and, through the display of the brushstrokes, to manifest virtuosity through the overcoming of technical challenges. The artist therefore attained something seemingly impossible by using a brush to paint fine details in the limited space of the folio; making evident the fact that the illumination was painted, and not drawn in metalpoint or pen, made it even more praise-worthy. The illuminator's precision in the application and handling of paint, and their accuracy in depicting details, with the emphasis on the painterly means with which such a representation was created, highlighted the status of the object, be it a prayer book, breviary or a book of hours, destined for the private admiration and personal use of the owner. The microscale meant that these volumes were not only things that stimulated pious prayer, but that they were primarily designed to be manipulated, handled, turned, and opened; users had to turn over the pages or flip through the book, admiring its beautiful illuminations. They were a feast for the eyes and a vehicle of haptic joy for their owner's hands.



Fig. 144: Workshop of Simon Marmion, *Breviary of Charles the Bold*, 1467–1470, illumination from the section preserved in New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.2477)



Fig. 145: Workshop of Liévin van Lathem, *Prayer Book of Charles the Bold*, illumination 1469, text 1470–1471, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. 37 (89.ML.35), fol. 1v–2r

Thus, the *Breviary* (or the *Book of Hours*) of *Charles the Bold*, executed in the workshop of Simon Marmion in Valenciennes between 1467 and 1470, surviving in fragmentary state (Cleveland Museum of Art, inv. no. 2005.55; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, inv. no. 1975.1.2477), is painted delicately in tempera and gold on folios, which measure 16×11.9 cm [fig. 144],⁷³ and the *Prayer Book of Charles the Bold* from the workshop of Liévin van Lathem in Antwerp (1469), written by Nicolas Spierinc in Ghent between 1470 and 1471 (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. 37) measures only 12.4×9.2 cm [fig. 145].⁷⁴ To the similar category of small

⁷³ *Breviary (or the Book of Hours) of Charles the Bold*, from Cleveland and New York: Th. Kren, S. McKendrick et al., *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe*, exh. cat., J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles 2003, pp. 105–106.

⁷⁴ *The Prayer Book of Charles the Bold* from J. Paul Getty Museum: Th. Kren, S. McKendrick et al., *Illuminating the Renaissance...*, pp. 128–131, cat. no. 16; A. de Schryver, *Le livre de prières de Charles de Téméraire. Ms. 37*, *The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles*, facsimile edition with commentary, Luzern 2007; A. de Schryver, *The Prayer Book of Charles the Bold: A Study of a Flemish Masterpiece from the Burgundian Court*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles 2008.

books of hours belongs the fifteenth-century *Codex 470* from the Biblioteca Trivulziana in Milan, consisting of 366 folios measuring 13.3×8.9 cm, decorated with twenty-two miniatures *en grisaille* in the workshop or in the circle of Philippe de Mazerolles [fig. 146].⁷⁵ The tiny format characterises the prayer book from Frankfurt (Museum Angewandte Kunst, LM 35) by the Master of Codex Rotundus, active in Bruges in the 1470s – only 9.8×6.9 cm [fig. 147].⁷⁶ It is but one example of the common practice of making small codices in Bruges, and other Netherlandish centres, and a testimony to the wide-spreading of the type. We know that in the second half of the fifteenth century these books were sold on the open market, directly from the workshops, and at markets and fairs, such as Pand in Bruges, or similar fairs in Antwerp. The *Prayer Book of Nikolaus Humbracht the Younger* (Frankfurt, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. germ. oct. 3), measuring 13.9×10 cm, was created in the workshop in Antwerp in the early sixteenth century [fig. 148].⁷⁷ This and another *Book of Hours* from Frankfurt (Museum Angewandte Kunst, LM 56), illuminated by Simon Bening and another artist trained in Italy, probably between 1520 and 1530, testify to the long-lasting fashion for small illuminated manuscripts [fig. 149].⁷⁸



Fig. 146: Workshop or school of Philippe de Mazerolles, *Codex 470*, Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana

75 G. Bologna, *Illuminated Manuscripts: The Book before Gutenberg*, New York 1988.

76 J. Sander, "Die Entdeckung der Kunst." *Niederländische Kunst des 15. und 16. Jahrhundert in Frankfurt*, exh. cat. Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt, Mainz 1995, cat. no. 12.

77 J. Sander, "Die Entdeckung der Kunst"....., cat. no. 40.

78 J. Sander, "Die Entdeckung der Kunst"....., cat. no. 25.



Fig. 147: Master of the Codex Rotundus (Bruges, 1470s), *Prayer Book LM 35*, Frankfurt, Museum Angewandte Kunst



Fig. 148: Antwerp, early 16th century, *Prayer Book of Nikolaus Humbracht the Younger*, Frankfurt, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. germ. oct. 3



Fig. 149: Simon Bening and workshop, *Book of Hours LM 56*, c. 1520–1530, Frankfurt, Museum Angewandte Kunst, L.M.56, fol. 136

One of the most precious and refined late medieval books, the so-called *Black Hours*, now at the Morgan Library in New York (inv. no. M. 493), was created in 1475 in Bruges in the workshop or in the circle of Willem Vrelant, for an unknown person of the Burgundian court of Charles the Bold [fig. 150].⁷⁹ The one hundred and twenty-one black pages are decorated with forty figurative illuminations, fifty initials and foliage in one hundred and thirty-eight borders, all painted in bright colours, and in silver and gold, with texts written in gold and silver. The codex is one of a few surviving Flemish manuscripts with pages painted black (for instance the *Black Prayer Book of Charles the Bold*, also called the *Black Book of Hours of Galeazzo Maria Sforza* c. 1466–1475, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1856, 25 × 18cm – [fig. 151]).⁸⁰ Unlike other

79 Voelkle, *Schwarzes Stundenbuch. Wissenschaftlicher Kommentarband zur Faksimile-Ausgabe von Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, M. 493*, Luzern 2001 (also English edition).

80 *The Black Prayer Book of Charles the Bold, / Black Book of Hours of Galeazzo Maria Sforza*: A. De Schryver, “L’oeuvre authentique de Philippe de Mazerolles, enlumineur de Charles le Téméraire,” in: *Cinq-centième anniversaire de la bataille de Nancy*, (colloquium Nancy 1977), Nancy 1979, pp. 135–144,

manuscripts with stained black pages, this volume is rather small: 17 x 12cm. The micro-format emphasises the skill of the illuminator, and forces viewers to admire the virtuosity of the execution of the smallest details and shapes; the reduced scale, by contrast, highlights the profusion of small figures and the richness of the details.

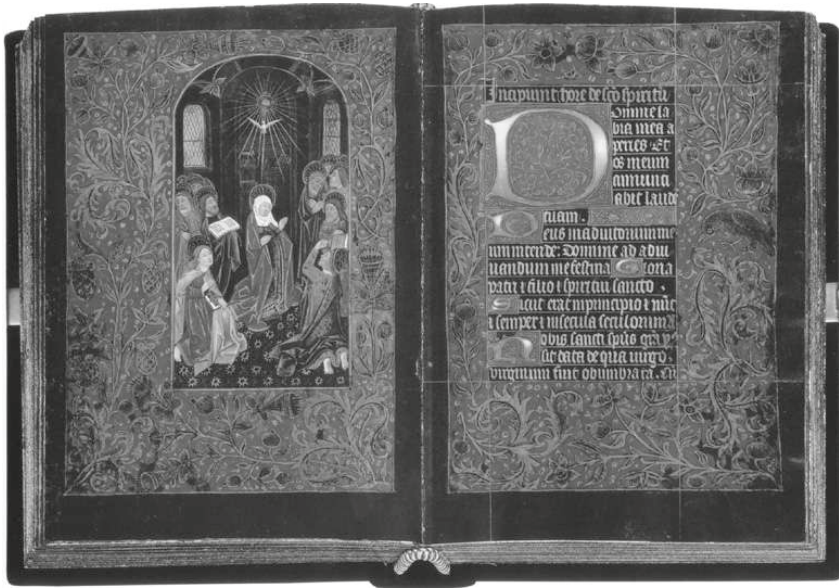


Fig. 150: Workshop of Willem Vrelant?, *Black Hours*, c. 1475, New York, The Morgan Library, M. 493

on pp. 141–143; O. Pächt, D. Thoss, *Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabeln der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Flämische Schule*, vol. II, Vienna 1990, pp. 17–35; D. Thoss, “Der Meister des Schwarzen Gebetbuchs: Ein holländischer Buchmaler?,” in: *Masters and Miniatures: Medieval Manuscript Illumination in the Northern Netherlands*, (congress, Utrecht 1991), Doornspijk 1991, pp. 149–160; A. De Schryver, “Philippe de Mazerolles: le livre d’heures noir et les manuscrits d’Ordonnances militaires de Charles le Téméraire,” *Revue de l’art* 126, 1999, pp. 58–64.

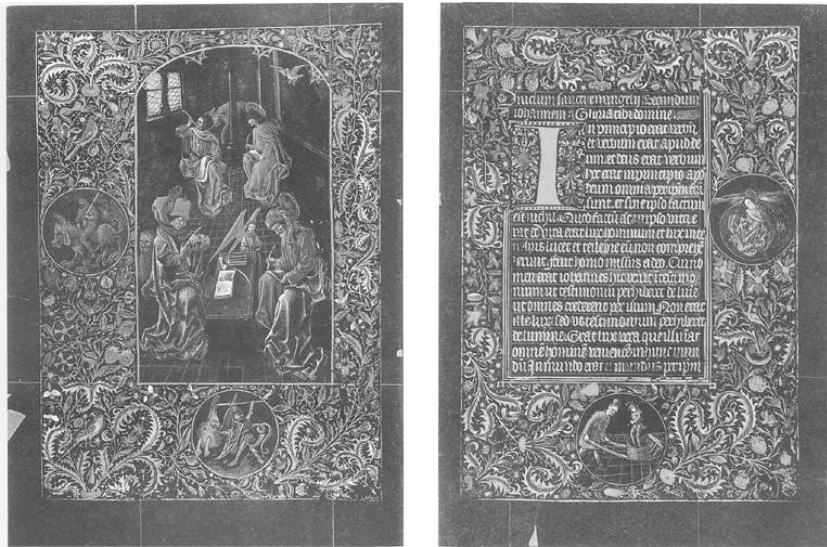


Fig. 151: Master of Anthony of Burgundy (Philippe de Mazerolles?), *Black Prayer Book of Charles the Bold* (*Black Book of Hours of Galeazzo Maria Sforza*), c. 1466–1475, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1856



Fig. 152: Francesco di Antonio del Chierico, *Book of Hours of Lorenzo il Magnifico*, 1484–1485, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana

There are also Italian examples of small-scale manuscripts. For instance, the *Book of Hours of Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana),⁸¹ written in 1485, contains 233 pages in small format (15.3 x 9cm). It is decorated in the style characteristic of Cosimo's and Lorenzo's favoured illuminator, Francesco di Antonio del Chierico, active between 1454 and 1484 [fig. 152].



Fig. 153: Jean Pucelle, *Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, c. 1325–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1954 (54.1.2)

81 *Book of Hours of Lorenzo il Magnifico: Il libro d'ore di Lorenzo de' Medici. Volume di commento*, eds. F. Arduini, C. Acidini Luchinat, F. Arduini, L. Regnicoli, A. Di Domenico, Modena 2005 (volume accompanying the facsimile edition, Modena 2004).



Fig. 154: *Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, held in hands by a reader-viewer

The tradition of small-scale books goes back to the fourteenth century and is linked with the production of illuminated manuscripts for powerful women – queens and duchesses.⁸² *The Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2) [figs. 153–154, 473–474],⁸³ commissioned by the Queen's husband, Charles IV (1322–1328), and executed between 1324 and 1328 by Jean Pucelle, contains prayers in the Dominican system and served the deeply personal piety of the French Queen. The codex has two hundred and nine pages and measures only 9.4 x 6.4cm. Its small folios include Latin texts, twenty-five

82 **Book of hours as a form of female piety:** A.G. Pearson, *Envisioning Gender in Burgundian Devotional Art, 1350–1530: Experience, Authority, Resistance*, (series: Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Aldershot 2005; E. L'Estrange, *Holy Motherhood: Gender, Dynasty and Visual Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, Manchester 2008 (in particular part II: *Manuscript case studies from the houses of Anjou, Brittany and France*); J.M. Hand, *Women, Manuscripts and Identity in Northern Europe, 1350–1550*, Farnham, Surrey – Burlington, Vermont 2013. Cf. A. More, *Fictive Orders and Feminine Religious Identities, 1200–1600*, Oxford 2018.

83 **The Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux:** *Das Stundenbuch der Jeanne d'Evreux / The Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux / Le livre d'heures de Jeanne d'Evreux*, facsimile edition with commentary, eds. B. Drake Boehm, A. Quandt, W.D. Wixom, Luzern/Lucerne 2000; B. Drake Boehm, *The Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux: A Prayer Book for the Queen*, CD-ROM, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1999.

full-page painted miniatures and seven hundred tiny figures in the margins. The *en grisaille* decoration highlights the sophisticated quality of the courtly codex. The motifs in the borders – flamboyant and anecdotal – and the main miniatures, placed within architectonic frames, form illusionistic compositions, which stress that the *libretto* was not only a handbook to assist in prayer, but also, if not primarily an artistic object, a kind of curiosity, a courtly toy. The *Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg* has a similar structure and function (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 1969.69.86) [fig. 155].⁸⁴ Its original owner was Bonne de Luxembourg, the daughter of the Bohemian king John of Luxembourg and the sister of the future emperor Charles the IV; she became the wife of John, Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou and Maine: the future king of France (John II the Good). It was decorated before 1349 by Jean Le Noir and his assistants, including his son, Burgot Le Noir. The manuscript measures 12.6 × 8.8cm and consists of 333 pages, which contain one hundred and fifty psalms in Latin, a French translation of the Passion prayers, and the calendar of feast days. It is richly illustrated with forty *en grisaille* or semi-*en grisaille* miniatures, and with birds and animals intertwined with foliage in the borders. Viewers can admire a huge range of birds, captured with unparalleled precision, as in an ornithological atlas, and hares, lions and chimeras. A slightly larger item, measuring 15.3 × 10.5cm is the so-called *Book of Hours of Marguerite de Beaujeu* (if she indeed was the original owner of the manuscript), preserved in the British Library in London, also known as the *Book of Hours from Saint-Omer* and arranged according to the liturgy of the local diocese. It was created either in Saint-Omer or Théroutanne between 1318 and 1325, for a high-ranking noble woman of Saint-Omer named Marguerite (the identification with the daughter of Louis de Beaujeu, Lord of Montferrand, the niece of the French connétable, Humbert de Beaujeu-Montpensier, is questionable). They are also rather richly decorated with minute illuminations, figurative miniatures and drolleries.⁸⁵

84 *Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg*: M. Krieger, “Der Psalter der Bonne de Luxembourg,” in: *King John of Luxembourg and the Art of His Era (1296–1346)* (conference in Prauge, 1996), pp. 69–81; A.I. Lermack, “Fit for a Queen: The Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg at the Cloisters, dissertation, University of Iowa, 1999; her, Spiritual pilgrimage in the ‘Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg,’” in: *The art, science, and technology of medieval travel*, ed. by R. Bork, A. Kann, Alsdershot 2008, pp. 97–111; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck: Grisallas*, exh. cat., Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid 2009, cat. no. 6 (with further bibliography).

85 *Book of Hours of Marguerite de Beaujeu: Les Heures de Marguerite de Beaujeu*, Paris 1925 (facsimile edition); M. Gil, L. Nys, *Saint-Omer gothique: les arts figuratifs à Saint-Omer à la fin du Moyen Age 1250–1550: peinture, vitrail, sculpture, arts du livre*, Valenciennes 2004.

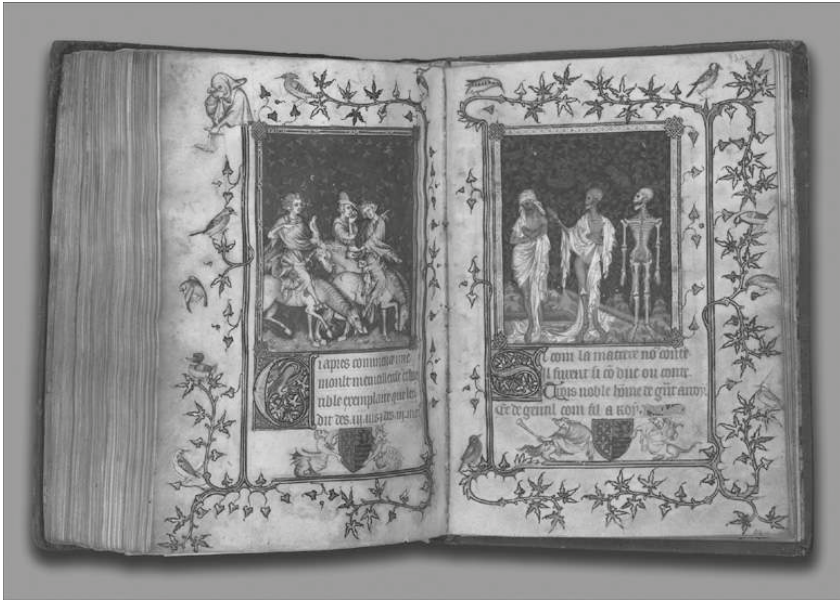


Fig. 155: Jean Le Noir and workshop, *Psalter of Bonne of Luxembourg*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1969 (69.86)



Fig. 156: Jean Poyer, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, illumination from the *Book of Hours of Anne of Brittany and Mary I of England*, c. 1498, Lyon, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms. 1558, fol. 35v

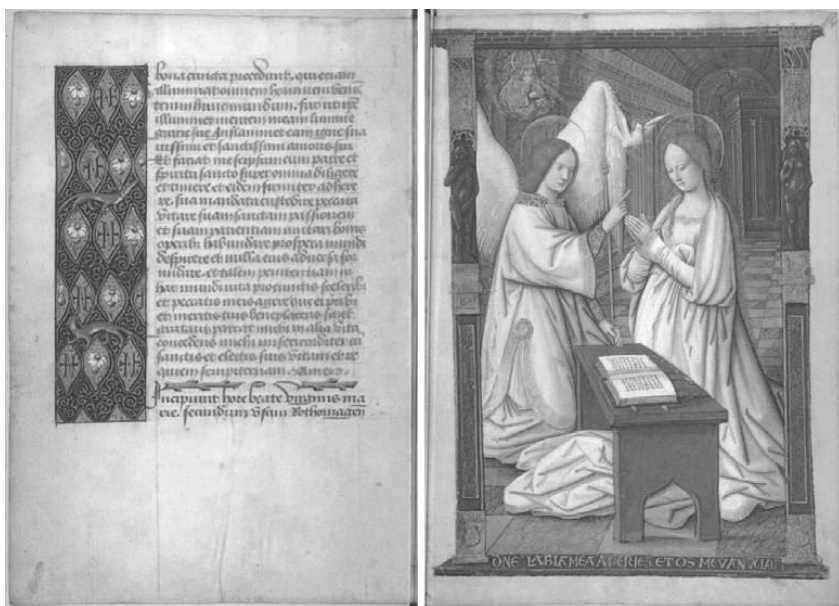


Fig. 157: Master of Petrarch's Triumphs, *Small Book of Hours of Anne of Brittany*, 1499–1514, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. nouv. acq. lat. 3027, fol 13v–14r

“Male” prayer books are typically larger. They are in a middling (c. 25 x 15cm.) or a large format, as for instance the famous *Grandes Heures du Duc de Berry* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 919, and Louvre, R.F. 2835), completed in 1409, decorated in turn by Jacquemart de Hesdin, Pseudo-Jacquemart and other illuminators; this measures 39.7 x 29.5cm. Further examples include the *Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut* (Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André, ms. 2) dated 1405–1408, with forty-four miniatures by the Boucicaut Master painted on pages measuring 27.4 x 19cm; or the *Grandes Heures de Rohan*, (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 9471), decorated between 1431 and 1433 by the Rohan Master with cards measuring 29 x 20cm.⁸⁶ At times, manuscripts commissioned

86 *Grandes Heures du Duc de Berry, Grandes Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut, and Grandes Heures des Ducs de Rohan*: M. Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Late Fourteenth Century and the Patronage of the Duke*, London–New York 1967, rev. 1969; his, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Boucicaut Master*, London–New York 1968; M. Thomas, *Grandes Heures de Jean, Duc de Berry*, Paris 1971; M. Meiss, *French Painting in the*

for women were also characterised by this large format, for instance the *Grandes Heures of Anne of Brittany* (30 x 19.5cm), illuminated by Jean Bourdichon between 1503 and 1508 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 9474).⁸⁷

Small-scale, female prayer books were commissioned throughout the fifteenth century. The *Book of Hours of Marguerite de Foix*, Duchess of Brittany, dated 1470–1480 (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, Salting Collection 1222), on 288 folios, measuring 17.6 x 10cm, include twenty-four calendar illustrations, twelve full-page miniatures and twenty-five smaller illustrations.⁸⁸ The tradition of small manuscripts is continued at the turn of the sixteenth century with another book of hours of Anne of

Time of Jean de Berry: The Limbourgs and their Contemporaries, New York–London 1974; Ch. de Mérindol, “Les Heures du maréchal de Boucicaut. Mise au point et nouvelles lectures. Réflexions sur les manuscrits à caractère officiel ou davantage privé,” in: *Flanders in a European Perspective: Manuscript Illumination around 1400 in Flanders and Abroad* (Colloquium, Leuven, 1993), (Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts 5), ed. by B. Cardon, M. Smeyers, Leuven 1995, pp. 61–74; *Paris 1400: Les arts sous Charles VI*, ed. by E. Taburet-Delahaye, F. Avril, exh. cat., Musée du Louvre, Paris 2004, cat. nos. 172, 232; *The Limbourg Brothers: Nijmegen masters at the French court 1400–1416*, ed. by R. Drückers, P. Roelofs, W.J. Niessen, M. van Veen-Liefrink, exh. cat., Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, Ghent 2005. Cf. A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. I, pp. 181, 227–228, 165–170.

87 *Great Hours of Anne of Brittany: Great Hours of Anne of Brittany*, ed. M. Miró (volume of the commentary to the facsimile edition of 2008), Barcelona 2010 (with full bibliography); D.E. Booton, “The book trade in and beyond the Duchy of Brittany,” in: *The culture and political legacy of Anne de Bretagne*, ed. by C.J. Brown, Cambridge 2012, pp. 11–28; E. L’Estrange, “Penitence, motherhood and Passion devotion,” in: *The culture and political legacy of Anne de Bretagne*, pp. 81–98.

88 *Book of Hours of Margaret de Foix*: E. L’Estrange, *Holy Motherhood: Gender, Dynasty and Visual Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, Manchester 2008 (in particular part II: *Manuscript case studies from the houses of Anjou, Brittany and France*); D.E. Booton, *Manuscripts, Market and the Transition to Print in Late Medieval Brittany*, Farnham, Surrey – Burlington, Vermont 2010, appendix B, s.v. *Marguerite de Foix* (the list of manuscripts of the duchess with full bibliography) and pp. 78, 79, 94, 152, 163, 319; D.E. Booton, “The book trade in and beyond the Duchy of Brittany,” in: *The culture and political legacy of Anne de Bretagne*, ed. by C.J. Brown, Cambridge 2012; R. Watson, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts. Victoria and Albert Museum: A catalogue of works in the National Art Library from the eleventh to the early twentieth century, with a complete account of the George Reid Collection*, London 2011, vol. 1, cat. no. 53.

Brittany, Duchess of Brittany and Queen of France, the wife of Charles VIII and later of Louis XII: the *Very Small Book of Hours* dated c. 1498 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. lat. 3120), measuring 6.6 × 4.6cm,⁸⁹ and the *Book of Hours from Nantes* (Bibliothèque Municipale, BM 18) measuring 12 × 8cm;⁹⁰ the *Book of Hours of Anne of Brittany and Mary I of England* dated c. 1498 (Lyon, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms. 1558), decorated by Jean Poyer (dimensions: 13.1 × 8.9cm);⁹¹ and finally, the slightly larger *Small Book of Hours of Anne of Brittany* dated 1499–1514 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. lat. 3027),⁹² measuring 17 × 12cm, with twelve surviving miniatures and rich decoration in the margins, including an emblematic, recurring motif of the ermine [figs. 156–157].

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- 89 *Les Très petites heures of Anne of Brittany: Manuscrits à peintures du XIII^e au XVI^e siècle*, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris 1955, no. 273; *Enrichissements de la Bibliothèque nationale, 1961–1973*, Paris 1974, no. 647; M. Jones, “Les manuscrits d’Anne de Bretagne, reine de France, duchesse de Bretagne,” *Mémoires de la Société d’Histoire et d’Archéologie de Bretagne* 55, 1978, pp. 43–81, cat. no. 1; P. Thibault. *Les Manuscrits de la collection d’Anne de Bretagne*, Blois 1991, cat. no. 12. **Codices of Anne of Brittany:** M. Jones, *Les manuscrits d’Anne de Bretagne...*; P. Thibault. *Les Manuscrits de la collection d’Anne de Bretagne*; M. Jones, “Les manuscrits enluminés d’Anne de Bretagne. Livres précieux ou instruments de propagande?,” in: *Anne de Bretagne – une histoire, un mythe*, ed. P. Chotard, exh. cat., Château des Ducs de Bretagne, Musée d’Histoire de Nantes, Paris 2007, pp. 85–96; S. Cassagnes-Brouquet, *Un manuscrit d’Anne de Bretagne: Les Vies des femmes célèbres d’Antoine Dufour*, Rennes 2007; D.E. Booton, *Manuscripts, Market and the Transition to Print in Late Medieval Brittany*, in particular chapter 3: *Ducal Patronage and Ownership* and appendix B – the list of manuscripts with bibliography on pp. 252 ff.; *The Cultural and Political Legacy of Anne de Bretagne, Negotiating Convention in Books and Documents*, ed. C.J. Brown, Woodbridge, Suffolk – Rochester, NY 2010; C.J. Brown, *The Queen’s Library: image-making at the court of Anne of Brittany, 1477–1514*, 2010, Philadelphia 2011; J.M. Hand, *Women, Manuscripts and Identity in Northern Europe, 1350–1550*, 2nd ed., London–New York 2016, pp. 30–32 and passim.
- 90 *Book of Hours from Nantes of Anne of Brittany:* M. Jones, *Les manuscrits d’Anne de Bretagne...*, cat. no. 2; P. Thibault. *Les Manuscrits de la collection d’Anne de Bretagne*, cat. no. 10. Cf. note 89.
- 91 *Book of Hours of Anne of Brittany and Mary I of England: France 1500. Entre Moyen-Âge et Renaissance*, ed. by G. Bresc-Bautier, Th. Crépin-Leblond, E. Taburet-Delahaye, exh. cat., Grand Palais, Paris 2010, cat. no. 55.
- 92 *Les Petites heures of Anne of Brittany:* M. Jones, *Les manuscrits d’Anne de Bretagne...*, cat. no. 8; P. Thibault. *Les Manuscrits de la collection d’Anne de Bretagne*, cat. no. 16. Cf. note 89.

The microscale renders these objects peculiarly mobile and tactile. They were destined to be held in hands, carried from one place to another, to be opened and closed, flipped through, unfolded, to have their pages turned over.⁹³ These diverse operations revealed their function as moveable, collectible items, objects of the greatest private luxury, things that delighted with their artifice and unusual form. Besides their religious function, they were also courtly toys, promoting the skill of the painter and the scribe, employed despite and against the constraints of the small scale. They were a testimony to the seemingly unattainable: a miraculously executed virtuosity.



Fig. 158: Workshop from Ghent or Bruges, *St. Anne*, illumination from a prayer book for the Poor Clares or Franciscan Tertiary Nuns, after 1503, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms II 6907, fol. 121v

93 Cf. in relation to the earlier, fourteenth-century codices: A.R. Stanton, “Turning the Pages: Marginal Narratives and Devotional Practice in Gothic Prayerbooks,” in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. I, pp. 75–121.

At the same time, their religious function, assisting the individual with their prayers, continued to be important. This role influenced their use, which was both manual and somatic. Namely, as in the case of the London *Seilern Triptych* from the circle of the Master of Flémalle (see chapter III.2, fig. 248), here in small- and medium-sized codices, we also see the fascinating traces of handling with such manuscripts. A good example of this is in the medium-sized manuscript II 6907 from the Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels, most likely commissioned for the Poor Clares or Franciscan tertiary nuns shortly after 1503 [fig. 158].⁹⁴ The decoration, including the miniatures and borders with illusionistic flowers, foliage, snails, and insects, was executed by a workshop from Bruges or Ghent. The manuscript includes prayers, including numerous indulgences, and offices for every day of the week. These prayers were meant to be read and spoken in front of the miniatures with saints and cult objects to which they were addressed, including Christ (illuminations showing *Arma Christi* or the *Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem*), the Virgin (miniature of *Virgo in Sole*), and St. Anne. Mary's mother is depicted in the scene on fol. 121v, which shows the moment when the Christ Child is passed from his mother's lap into St. Anne's embrace. This moving, devotional scene captures the tenderness of motherhood and the aura of family love. It stimulated not only pious meditation and contemplation, but also a very physical interaction. The faces of all three figures – St. Anne, the Virgin and Child – are completely blurred and smudged. Apparently, such “damage” was caused by the frequent kissing of the depicted characters. Whilst holding the manuscript in their hands, the nuns or pious women held the miniature up to their lips – and, mesmerized, kissed it, often and passionately, so that the paint became diluted and smeared. Truly, it is difficult to find better evidence of the sensual, somatic handling of devotional objects in the Late Middle Ages.⁹⁵

III.1.2. Precious metalwork

During the reigns of Charles VI, Queen Isabeau and the Valois Dukes – Louis I and Louis II of Anjou, Jean de Berry, and the great Burgundian

94 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent: Imagining Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages*, (Disciplina Monastica 8), Turnhout 2011, pp. 228–230.

95 For the **manual handling of late medieval manuscripts** see: K.M. Rudy, *Piety in Pieces: How Medieval Readers Customized Their Manuscripts*, Cambridge 2016. Cf. P. Schmidt, “Der Finger in der Handschrift. Vom Öffnen, Blättern und Schließen von Codices auf spätmittelalterlichen Bildern,” in: *Codex und Raum* (colloquium: Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, 2006; Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien 21), ed. by S. Müller, L. E. Saurma-Jeltsch, P. Strohschneider, Wiesbaden 2009, pp. 85–125.

dukes – the French and Burgundian goldsmiths attained new technical and artistic heights.⁹⁶ Between 1380 and 1422 over six hundred goldsmiths worked in Paris and Dijon to satisfy the growing market, later supported by the Netherlandish workshops, mostly in Bruges and Brussels. Thanks to the invention of *en ronde-bosse* enamels, and because of the strict regulations enforced over the quantity of precious metals in various alloys and new marks of gold content, artisans produced sophisticated, precisely made, skilful and precious *objects d'art* for the king, the queen and the Dukes of Burgundy, Berry, Bourbon and Anjou.⁹⁷ This brought about a great fashion

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- 96 **Parisian and Burgundian metalwork c. 1400:** E. Kovács, *L'âge d'or de l'orfèvrerie parisienne au temps des princes de Valois*, Dijon 2004. The synthesis on fifteenth-century metalwork in France is provided in: É. Taburet-Delahaye, "L'orfèvrerie," in: *Art et société en France au XV^e siècle*, ed. by Ch. Prigent, Paris 1999, pp. 258–288. See also: R. Lightbown, *Secular Goldsmiths' Work in Medieval France*, London 1978; P. Henwood, "Le Trésor royal sous le règne de Charles VI, 1380–1422: "Etude sur les inventaires, les orfèvres parisiens et les principaux artistes du roi," *École nationale des Chartes. Positions des thèses*, 1978, pp. 91–98; P. Henwood, "Les orfèvres parisiens pendant le règne de Charles VI (1380–1422)," *Bulletin Archéologique*, n.s. 15, 1979, pp. 85–180; P. Henwood, "Administration et vie des collections d'orfèvrerie royales sous le règne de Charles VI, 1380–1422," *Bibliothèque d'École des Chartes* CXXX, VIII, 1980, pp. 179–215; R. Eikermann, *Franko-flämische Emailplastik des Spätmittelalters*, dissertation, University of Munich 1984; R. Eikermann, "Goldschmiedekunst am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund," in: *Die Kunst der burgundischen Niederlande*, pp. 85–101; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 40–44, 229–233; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów I*, pp. 139–148 and 212–216. See also exhibition catalogues: *Paris 1400. Les arts sous Charles VI*, ed. by E. Taburet-Delahaye, Musée du Louvre, Paris 2004; *Les princes des fleurs de lis. La France et les arts en 1400*, eds. S. Laporte, E. Taburet-Delahaye, Paris 2004; I. Villela-Petit, *Le gothique international. L'art en France au temps de Charles VI*, Paris 2004; *Art from the Court of Burgundy: The Patronage of Philip the Bold and John the Fearless 1364–1419*, eds. S. Jugie, S.N. Fliegel et al., exh. cat. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon – The Cleveland Museum of Art 2004; M. Campbell, *Medieval Jewellery in Europe 1100–1500*, New York 2009; P. Williamson, G. Davies, *Medieval Ivory Carvings: 1200–1550*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London 2014; O.J. Rojewski, *Arte, ceremonial y esplendor festivo en la corte de los Duques de Borgoña (1419–1477). Los valets de chambre y sus tareas artísticas*, dissertation, University of Jaume I, Castello de la Plana 2018, chapter 4.1.2–4.1.3.
- 97 R. Lightbown, *Secular Goldsmith's Work in Medieval France*; E. Kovács, *L'âge d'or de l'orfèvrerie parisienne...*; see also: P. Henwood, *Le Trésor royal sous le règne de Charles VI*; P. Henwood, *Les Orfèvres parisiens pendant le règne de Charles VI ...*; P. Henwood, *Administration et vie des collections d'orfèvrerie royales sous le règne de Charles VI...*

and demand for jewels and precious items. They were commissioned and bought out of a fascination with their splendour, and admiration for the skill of their makers; as such they were ornaments and indexes of the status of their owners. They were frequently offered as diplomatic gifts,⁹⁸ and their religious functions, be it devotional or liturgical, were merely secondary. They included large-scale examples such as the *Goldenes Rössl* (now at the Treasury of the Altötting Abbey, Bavaria), but most commonly they were objects of small if not miniature dimensions [fig. 14].⁹⁹

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- 98 **Goldsmiths' work as royal and ducal gifts:** B. Büttner, "Past Presents: New Year's Gifts at the Valois Courts, ca. 1400," *The Art Bulletin* 83, 2001, pp. 598–625; J. Hirschbiegel, *Étrennes. Untersuchungen zum höfischen Geschenkverkehr im spätmittelalterlichen Frankreich der Zeit König Karls VI. (1380–1422)*, Munich 2003; A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów*, vol. I, pp. 141–147. For the tradition of gift giving in medieval and early modern society see N. Z. Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France*, Oxford 2000; A.J.A. Bijsterveld, "The Medieval Gift as Agent of Social Bonding and Political Power: A Comparative Approach," in: *Medieval Transformations: Texts, Power, and Gifts in Context*, ed. by E. Cohen, M. De Jong, Leiden–Boston–Cologne 2001, pp. 123–156; A.-J. Bijsterveld, *Do Ut Des: Gift Giving, Memoria, and Conflict Management in the Medieval Low Countries*, Hilversum 2007; M. Proctor-Tiffany, "Transported as a rare object of distinction: the gift-giving of Clémence of Hungary, Queen of France," *Journal of Medieval History* 41, 2015, no. 2, pp. 208–228; L. Kjær, *The Medieval Gift and the Classical Tradition: Ideals and the Performance of Generosity in Medieval England, 1100–1300*, Cambridge 2019; M. Proctor-Tiffany, *Medieval Art in Motion: The Inventory and Gift Giving of Queen Clémence de Hongrie*, University Park, Pasadena, 2019.
- 99 **Goldenes Rössl:** *Das Goldene Rössl. Ein Meisterwerk der Pariser Hofkunst um 1400*, ed. R. Baumstark, exh. cat., Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich 1995; J. Stratford, "The Goldenes Rössl and the French Royal Collections," in: *Treasure in the Medieval West*, ed. by E.M. Tyler, Woodbridge (Suffolk) 2000, pp. 109–133; J. Hirschbiegel, *Étrennes: Untersuchung zum höfischen Geschenkverkehr im spätmittelalterlichen Frankreich der Zeit König Karls VI*, Munich 2003; *Von Paris nach Bayern. Das Goldene Rössl und Meisterwerke der französischen Hofkunst um 1400*, ed. by R. Eikermann, exh. cat., Stadtgalerie Altötting, Munich 2006; C. Märthl, "Das Goldene Rössl," in: *Ein Museum der bayerischen Geschichte*, ed. by K. Weigand, J. Zedler, Munich 2015, pp. 173–192; D. Nissim, "Knight, Horse, and Groom Called to the Rescue: Secular Figures in the Goldenes Rössl," *Journal of Arts and Humanities* 4, 2015, no. 10, pp. 1–13.



Fig. 159: Franco-Flemish or German workshop, Golden altarpiece with the *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1400–1410, Frankfurt, Museum Angewandte Kunst



Fig. 160: Southern German workshop (Bavaria or Austria), *Altarpiece of the Passion*, silvered and gilded copper, c. 1430, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan 1917, 17.190.369

The small golden altarpiece in Frankfurt (Museum Angewandte Kunst) [fig. 159], which shows inside the *Adoration of the Magi* and Sts. Barbara and Catherine, and on the versos the *Annunciation*, is embossed and pounced in gilded copper and is characterised by its extremely small scale: 13.5 x 32cm.¹⁰⁰ Another similar object – the Passion triptych in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917), executed in gilded copper and silver, originally partially enamelled, measures 24.8 x 40.2cm [fig. 160]. It was probably made by a German artist – from Bavaria or Austria – in around 1430.¹⁰¹ The two objects were portable, used during journeys or carried from one place to another, between the different living quarters of their owners. Created in precious materials, with skilful methods (pouncing, embossing, enamelling), they delighted with the price of the material and the skill of their makers, but at the same time they stressed the splendour of their owners, as visible signs of

100 **The Adoration altarpiece in Frankfurt:** J. Sander, “*Die Entdeckung der Kunst*”..., cat. no. 1.

101 **The Passion altarpiece in New York:** J.J. Alexander, “A Metalwork Triptych of the Passion of Christ in the Metropolitan Museum, New York,” *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 46/47, 1993/1994 (*Festschrift Gerhard Schmidt*), pp. 27–36; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck to Dürer: The Influence of Early Netherlandish Painting on European Art, 1430–1530*, exh. cat., Groeningemuseum Bruges 2010–2011, London–New York 2011; (in Netherlandish: *Van Eyck tot Dürer. De Vlaamse primitieven & Centraal-Europa 1430–1530*, Tiel–Bruges 2010; in German: *Van Eyck bis Dürer. Altniederländische Meister und die Malerei in Mitteleuropa 1430–1530*, Stuttgart 2010; in French: *De Van Eyck à Dürer. Les primitifs flamands & l’Europe centrale 1430–1530*, Paris 2010), cat. no. 182 (with further bibliography).

their power, kept and displayed among various other precious items, such as illuminated books, jewels, and metalwork. The common use of these small-scale props, visible traces of courtly splendour, can be identified through the links between the execution of the work in precious metals and manuscript illuminations. The triptych from New York in its composition resembles illuminations by the Limburg Brothers and the Boucicaut Master, therefore it seems plausible that the goldsmiths working for the likely patron – the Duke of Bavaria, Louis the Bearded (1338–1447), the brother of the French Queen Isabeau de Bavière, were familiar with Franco-Flemish manuscript illuminations.



Fig. 161: Parisian or Southern Netherlandish workshop, Medallion with the Holy Trinity, c. 1400–1410, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Widener Collection 1942.9.287

Various medallions hanging on chains or necklaces (*pendants*) or pinned onto coats as brooches, were not only worn to ornament garments, but, executed with the utmost precision, they were intended to be held in hand and inspected up-close. They were meant to delight the eye and entertain with their minute form. Sophisticated details and the theme of the medallion were revealed only when scrutinised at a short distance. The medallion with the Holy Trinity (The Throne of Grace of the *Pietas Patris* type), made in Paris (or in the Southern Netherlands) in gold and multi-coloured enamel, decorated with pearls

(c. 1400–1410, Washington, National Gallery of Art) [fig. 161],¹⁰² is perhaps the jewel listed in the inventory of the precious belongings of Gian Galeazzo Sforza, pawned at a Milanese merchant's in 1402 and 1403 (although a similar item is also included in the inventory of the chapel at Dijon, as being among the possessions of Philippe the Bold of Burgundy in 1404). The theme of the medallion, measuring 12cm in diameter, was recognisable at a relatively long distance, but the figures and minute details could be admired fully only when up close. This means that it was necessary to move the object, or for the beholder to look more closely. A significantly smaller medallion, only 4.5cm in diameter, from Aachen (Domschatzkammer), created in the early fifteenth century in gilded silver, *en ronde bosse* enamel and pearls, served as a necklace pendant [fig. 162].¹⁰³ The current assemblage of the necklace is in fact of a later date (the last third of the fifteenth century), but it most likely recalls the original arrangement. Perhaps it formed a part of the gift of Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy and wife of Charles the Bold, to the Cathedral in Aachen, destined to decorate the venerated statue of the Virgin; the Duchess went there on a pilgrimage in 1474 to visit the holy image and bequeathed many precious objects to it. Originally, the medallion was worn on the festive robe. It depicts a small, delightful child – not necessarily the Christ Child – playing with a spoon and plate during his meal. To see these details, one had to examine the object from between 10 to 20cm or bring it close to the eyes. The task of unravelling the minute details must have been good entertainment. When the medallion and the necklace were placed on the Aachen Madonna, their details remained practically invisible, redundant for its new function.

102 R. Distelberger, A. Luchs, Ph. Verdier, T.H. Wilson. *Western Decorative Arts, Part I: Medieval, Renaissance, and Historicizing Styles including Metalwork, Enamels, and Ceramics*, (The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue), Washington 1993, pp. 48–53; P. Venturelli, “Smalti ‘en ronde bosse’ per I Visconti,” in: *Smalto, oro, e preziosi. Oreficeria ed artisuntuarie nel Ducato di Milano tra Visconti e Sforza*, Venice 2003, pp. 15–57; *Art from the Court of Burgundy...*, cat. no. 52 (with further bibliography).

103 *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, cat. no. 75.



Fig. 162: Parisian or Southern Netherlandish workshop, necklace with a pendant, (pendant c. 1400–1415; necklace c. 1475–1490), Aachen, Domschatzkammer

The same applies to sophisticated and precious tableware. In Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer), there is a surviving set of knives with brown handles, decorated with ivory reliefs [fig. 163].¹⁰⁴ Perhaps, these items belonged to the prominent and dazzling gift of Charles the Bold given to the Emperor Frederick III and his son, Maximilian, during their diplomatic meeting in Trier in 1475. The reliefs on the handles (14cm) show pages, courtly cavaliers and dames, as well as Saints Barbara and Catherine. These knives were display rather than functional objects; they manifested courtly splendour, and were shown

104 *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, cat. no. 116.

to the guests among other precious items, but they might also have been used by servants during special occasions, such as ceremonial feasts, to carve, portion and serve the meat. In both contexts, these items were held in the hand, manipulated, and their reliefs viewed close to. Similarly, one could admire an amusing monkey riding a deer, executed in painterly enamel and niello on a gilded silver spoon of 5.1cm in width, today at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London [fig. 164].¹⁰⁵ The spoon came from a fifteenth century set created in a Franco-Flemish goldsmith's workshop c. 1410–1420. Monkeys belonged to the repertoire of courtly curiosities; they were kept at the courts and played with; as, rare and expensive exotic animals, they manifested the wealth of their owner and the refined ludic character of elite culture. During banquets and feasts pantomimes took place with actors dressed as monkeys, or the actual trained monkeys danced and performed various tricks. Such *entremets* – spectacles in between the courses – were performed in Bruges in 1468, during the famous marriage of Charles the Bold to Margaret of York. A guest who lifted a spoon or a different element of the tableware would be amused in a twofold manner, as he/she just saw or was about to see such an interlude with an ape.

105 *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, cat. no. 114.



Fig. 163: Southern Netherlandish workshop, set of knives of Maximilian I, c. 1470, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer



Fig. 164: Franco-Flemish workshop, gilded silver spoon with an enamel decoration showing a monkey riding a deer, c. 1410–1420, London, The Victoria & Albert Museum, C.2-1935

The focused gaze, looking from up close; the diligent scrutiny of details – these are the conditions of viewing the entertainment objects that belonged to courtly culture. But this mode of seeing was extended to other objects. The so-called *Libretto* (*A Small Book*) now in the Museum of Florence Cathedral (Museo dell’Opera del Duomo) was a gift of the French king Charles V to his brother, Prince Louis I of Anjou [fig. 165].¹⁰⁶ It was created

106 *Libretto of Louis of Anjou: Les Fastes du Gothique: Le Siècle de Charles V*, eds J. Favier et al., exh. cat., Grand Palais, Paris 1981, pp. 260–262; F. Geens, *Ungs très petiz tableaux à pignon, qui cloent et ouvrent, esmaillez dehors et dedens: A Study of Small Scale, Folding Pieces of Goldsmith’s Work in Fourteenth Century Europe*, dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London 2002, pp. 29–35; p. 255; E. Kovács, *L’âge d’or de l’orfèvrerie parisienne...*, pp. 174–179; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 230–232. B. Carqué, *Stil und Erinnerung: französische Hofkunst im Jahrhundert Karls V. und im Zeitalter ihrer Deutung*, Göttingen 2004.

from solid gold with enamels, pearls and rubies by a French goldsmith c. 1380. The book was a devotional item: a small, portable reliquary in the form of a folded polyptych or a harmonica folder. When unfolded it measures 24.4cm in width, whilst folded its dimensions are only 7.5 x 6.3cm. It fits easily in the palm. On its small panels, divided into four rows with microscopic arcades, there are relics with accompanying, explanatory texts on individual parchment cards. The most valuable relics – of the Passion of Christ, including fragments of the cross, spear, nails, and crown of thorns – are placed in the central part, covered by a plaquette, insertable from the top, decorated with an image of the Crucifixion on the one side and, on the other, the Adoration of the Holy Trinity (the Throne of Grace) by the ducal couple. The object was priceless, as it contained nearly eighty holy relics. It was meant to be open, unfolded, touched, and to be *looked* at. Finally, it was also used in prayers and meditations. But its primary role was to be admired, to dazzle with the richness of the materials used and the preciousness of the relics.

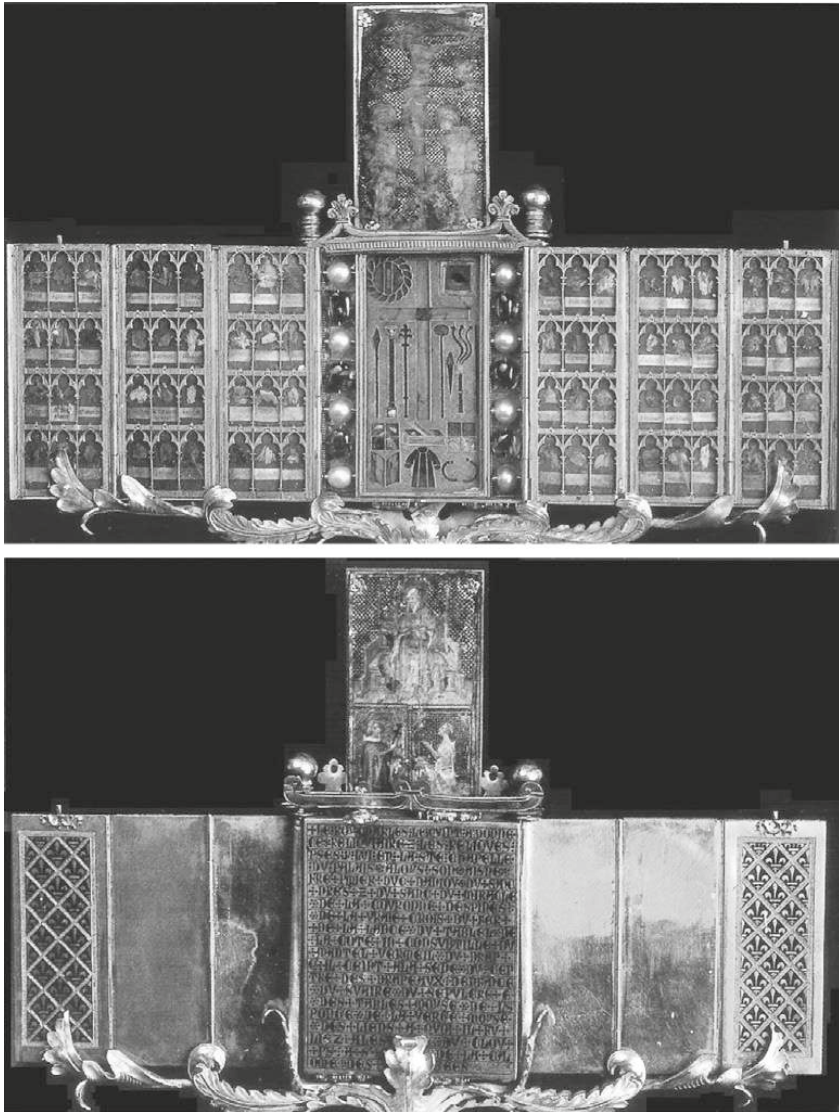


Fig. 165: Parisian workshop, *Libretto of Louis I of Anjou*, c. 1380, Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo – view of the open polyptych from the front and from the back; later base

The combination of the painting on the parchment of the moveable plaquette, with metal as the material of the main body of the work, was an important technical solution that made the object lighter than if it had been made entirely of gold. It was also an artistic choice, one that rendered the reliquary multi-coloured and captured the figures mimetically, most importantly the ducal couple adoring the Trinity. The juxtaposition of different materials created illusionistic effects and encouraged the beholder to handle the object. The lifting of the plaquette revealed the actual function of the object – it showed the most valuable relics kept inside. At the same time, however, the portraits of Louis and his wife are visible only when the plaquette is raised, and on its verso. Therefore, one had to turn over the *libretto* to see the scene of the adoration and figures of the owners on the plaquette, and read the inscription on the recto of the central golden panel. The text informs us about the circumstances of the object's commission by Charles V, and about the gift to the ducal couple, and lists the most important relics included in the reliquary.

Furthermore, the inserted plaquette brings the portraits of the owners into physical contact with the holy relics. Touching, having direct contact with the holy remains, enabled them to operate. It was a magical action, and thus the *libretto* was a talisman. As their cover the plaquette with the portraits protected the relics, whilst they themselves protected the owners through their sheer physical proximity. The *libretto* is an object to be carried with oneself (the current mount on the base is a much later addition); to be held in the hand so that its protective power could be absorbed, not only through looking but also through touching, bringing it close to the body, and presumably also through kissing.

Charles the V commissioned at least two, if not three similar reliquary *libretti*. Their story confirms the protective function of the amulet. The 'book' created for himself was inherited by his great-great-grandson, Charles VIII, who lost it during the battle of Fornovo in 1495, when he was defeated and arrested by the Milanese troops. It was described at the time as a small, folded *tableau* with relics, and it was subsequently depicted as such in a sixteenth-century drawing.¹⁰⁷ The description says that the king 'kept it always with him, as it ensured his safety.'¹⁰⁸ Charles V gave the second *libretto* to his

107 Venice, Archivio di Stato, Commemorativi Reg. 17, fol. 186v. S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, fig. 157.

108 B. Jestaz, "Le reliquaire de Charles V perdu par Charles VIII à Fornoue," *Bulletin monumental* 147, 1989, no. 1, pp. 7–10; cf. S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 231–232.

youngest brother, Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. The gift was noted in Philip's will (1404) in a particular manner. The document states that the reliquary contained relics from the Royal churches, namely Sainte-Chapelle and Saint-Denis; that it was to protect the continuity of the Valois-Bourgogne lineage, and that it could never be broken or damaged, or separated from the Duke; each subsequent duke was to carry it with himself, and not divide it into pieces.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps it was for this *libretto* that Philip the Good, another Burgundian Duke, commissioned a leather container in 1420/1421 for a '*tableau*, which the Duke carries always with him'.¹¹⁰ In turn, his son Charles the Bold lost this object – which is significant – at the battle of Grandson against the Swiss. It is clear that the Valois kings and dukes kept these reliquary *libretti* as protective amulets and took them to their battles. There is no documentary evidence for this supposition, but it is highly likely that a fourth *libretto* existed, which would have been bequeathed by the king to his fourth son – Duke Jean de Berry.

109 B. Prost, H. Prost, *Inventaires mobiliers et extraits des comptes des ducs de Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois, 1363–1477*, 2 vols., Paris 1902–1908, vol. II, p. 225, item 1409; cf. S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 232.

110 Lille, Archiv du Departament du Nord, B. 1923, year 1420/1421; cf. S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 232.



Fig. 166: Parisian workshop (French or Franco-Flemish), *Triptych from Chocques*, c. 1400, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, BK-17045 – view with wings open



Fig. 167: Parisian workshop (French or Franco-Flemish), *Triptych from Chocques*, c. 1400, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, BK-17045 – view of the triptych from the front and from the back, closed

A small French or Franco-Flemish triptych known as the *Triptych from Choques* (c. 1400, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) was equally handy and mobile, though designed only to be placed on a table and not to be carried on one's person [figs. 166–167].¹¹¹ With its wings open the triptych measured 12.7 x 12.5cm, and could have been handled to reveal the richness and variety of the techniques applied to suit the theme and purpose of the object. It was made of solid gold, the material suitable for containers of precious relics. These holy remains were placed in the centre of the main field, enclosed in a box accessible through a flap. The traces of usage on the edge suggest that it was frequently opened, and the relics viewed and perhaps also touched. On the flap there is a carved face of Christ of the veraicon or mandylion type – images of the celebrated relics – engraved in the technique of *pointillé*. Around it, in the remaining sections of the verso, is an Assumption of the Virgin, lifted by angels towards the Enthroned Christ in the mandorla. To see the relics, or to touch them and to admire the Holy Face, one had to turn the object around. The verso was the actual, functional front of the object. Turned again, with the recto facing the viewer, it showed on the closed wings St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine of Alexandria – the patrons of the Valois dynasty in the French Kingdom and in the Duchy of Burgundy – depicted in the monochromatic, flat *champlevé* enamel technique, which forms a background for the golden figures. Above them there is a full-figured group of the Coronation of the Virgin in pure, unenameled gold. The scene acts as a link to the main theme of the object: the Passion of Christ, and the Compassion of the Virgin. The opening of the wings reveals the multi-coloured image of the Man of Sorrows supported by the angel – an *Imago Pietatis* in the type of *Vir dolorum*, which refers to the miraculous image and the relics of the True Cross from the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome. It is likely that the fragment of the relics was placed in the triptych. The Angelic Pietà in the central panel was created in the technique *émail en ronde bosse*. The eyes are saturated with the white of Christ's body and the translucent red of His

111 *The Choques Triptych* in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam: H. van Os et al., *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500*, exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 1994, pp. 122–123; *Paris 1400. Les artes sous Charles VI*, cat. no. 90; S. Kemperdick, F. Lammertse, *The Road to Van Eyck*, cat. no. 22; *1100–1600*, ed. by F. Scholten, collection catalogue, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2015, cat. no. 12; P. Roelofs et al., *Johan Maelwael: Nijmegen – Paris – Dijon: Art around 1400*, exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2017, cat. no. 25.

cloak (*émail à rouge clair*). In the technique of multicolour *émail de basse taille* (enamel in low relief), the artist executed the figures on the external wings – the suffering Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist. The multiplication of the effects of precious materials, the gradation of colours, the shift from flat to three-dimensional forms was all revealed during the handling of the object: when it was moved, turned and open.

The manipulation of the object – holding it, touching it tenderly, bringing it closer to the eyes – results not only from a new type of devotion that is personal and direct, but also, primarily, from the new culture of collecting, developed c. 1400 by the Dukes and Kings of the Valois dynasty and their allies.

In his treasury, King Charles V kept hundreds of precious metalwork objects, with around twenty paintings and two hundred tapestries. Only a small number survived. The most precious show the owner's fascination with antiquity. An antique cameo made of agate, showing the bust of a Roman emperor, is mounted as the crowning element of the king's sceptre from c. 1365 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet des Médailles). A thoroughly new cover of the Ottonian Gospels, created in 1379, imitates the 'ancient' style used at the turn of the thirteenth century. This archaization was a collector's strategy that carried a political message: it highlighted the continuity of the monarch's power with tradition, legitimising the rule of the relatively new, Valois dynasty, and securing the image of the ruler after the national crisis of 1356–1364. His successor, Charles VI (ruled 1380 to 1422) – a weak, sickly monarch, under pressure from the competing Armagnac and Burgundian factions, who finally surrendered Paris and northern France to the English troops of Henry V and the Burgundian Philip the Good – was actually a distinguished collector. His collection of precious items included metalwork, embroidered draperies and garments, tapestries and books. Unfortunately, the fantastic collections he inherited from his father were partially appropriated by the regents of the underaged king: Louis of Anjou, Jean de Berry and Philip the Bold, and even Louis II Bourbon; his own collection was reduced by the expenses incurred during courtly celebrations and wars with the English and Burgundians. In the end, the collection was dispersed following the conquest of Paris in 1422 and the taking over of the court by Duke John Bedford, the Regent of France for Henry VI of England. Prior to these events, Paris remained the capital of European courtly splendour and the centre of production of luxury objects. An important role in this was played by Charles's wife, Queen Isabeau de Bavière, an amateur of finely executed precious items and the owner of a private collection of jewels and metalwork. Between 1380 and 1422 over six hundred goldsmiths were active in Paris, all producing sophisticated, skilfully and precisely executed, costly

objects d'art for the king and queen, as well as for the Dukes of Burgundy, Berry, Bourbon and Anjou, satisfying the huge demand and fashion for expensive items and jewels. These objects functioned as ornaments and evidence of their owner's status; only their secondary role was devotional or liturgical. These portable, collectible items often became gifts, necessary in the complex diplomatic system. They also served as *ex-votos* donated to various churches or monasteries, and in both instances they manifested the power, might and wealth of the donor.

Louis of Anjou was a particularly avid collector of precious metalwork, as documented by the two inventories of his estate. He manifestly enjoyed arranging, categorizing and describing the objects in his collection: he dictated and introduced by his own hand the items into these inventories. The first one from 1365–1368 lists almost eight hundred objects,¹¹² whilst the later one from 1379–1380 gives three thousand six hundred items.¹¹³ Detailed descriptions indicate the passion of their owner for both artistic skill and for the preciousness of the materials used. Louis's collection of luxurious golden and silver tableware was the largest in France, and he also collected other types of metalwork, jewels, tapestries and books. The inventories testify to the overwhelming richness and diversity of forms and techniques. Apart from the aforementioned *libretto*, his collection included: a golden chalice with portraits of the Duke and Duchess and their entourage against a background decorated with foliage; tableware in the shape of a gryphon, monkey, fox and peacock; a silver, gilded and enamelled ship; a cup with the coat-of-arms of France, Navarre and Champagne, which came from the treasury of King Philip VI of Valois, decorated in the rare technique of *plique à jour* enamel. Unfortunately, almost nothing has survived from this fine collection. The objects were sold or melted down to make coins, or divided into individual precious stones to finance the expenses of Louis's war campaigns.

The ducal collection of Jean de Berry is well known thanks to inventories from 1401–1403, 1413–1414 and 1416, drafted by the custodian of the treasury, Robinet d'Etampes; the first list includes 1,317. Characteristic of Jean de Berry's pattern of collecting are numerous antique specimens: thirty-three cameos and medals of the four Roman emperors, encrusted with precious stones. For the treasury of Sainte-Chapelle in Bourges, the Duke ordered a beautiful, thoroughly *all'antica* cameo, with his portrait based on images of enthroned Roman emperors, crowned by two Victories (Paris, Louvre, MR 80).

112 Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, ms. fr. 11861.

113 Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, ms. nouv. acq. fr. 6338.



Fig. 168: *Portrait of Philip the Bold the Duke of Burgundy*, sixteenth- or seventeenth-century copy of the lost original dated c. 1400, Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts (on long-term loan to the Louvre)

The Burgundian dukes collected metalwork on a significant scale, though their passion was not as grand as that of Queen Isabeau, Louis I of Anjou or Jean de Berry. Philip the Bold collected golden and silver crosses and reliquaries, tableware, ornaments for the table, jewels and decorations for garments. They demonstrated the splendour of his court during various celebrations: at banquets, sojourns in various cities, marriages, or by becoming gifts. The Dukes introduced the fashion for necklaces and golden jewels decorated with white enamels with motifs of animals, angels and sophisticated ladies; the Duke himself wore bracelets and pouches incrustated with jewels [fig. 168]. His New Year's gifts included precious stones and metalwork, for instance in 1382 he gave a few golden brooches with white enamels to King Charles, at least one of which had the motif of the *fleur-de-lis* (lilies from the French coat-of-arms); he gave another to Monsieur d'Arquel with a motif of a white dog. The receipts from 1389–1390- and later documents testify to

the frequent orders of figures, figurative groups, devotional altars, golden – *ymages* and *tableaux* – with the Holy Trinity, the Crucifixion, the Pietà or with saints, destined to be offered as gifts. The wife of the Duke, Marguerite de Mâle, had her own collection of jewels and precious things, described in detail in a postmortem inventory of 1405. John the Fearless, who did not have the resources of his father, collected mostly stones, predominantly skilfully cut diamonds. However, he also bought *juweelen*: rings, necklaces, brooches and rosaries with his personal emblems. In turn, the collection of Philip the Good was admired by contemporaries for its richness. He bought metalwork and jewels not in Paris but in the Netherlands – mostly from goldsmiths in Bruges. Towards the end of his life it took three days to inventory all the golden metalwork in his vast collection.

These treasuries also contained large-scale objects, such as the various *tableaux à l'image* – scenically arranged, animated figurative groups of the *Goldenes Rößl* type [fig. 14]: *Tableau de la Trinité* from the Louvre; the *Calvary of Matthias Corvinus* from Esztergom; and the *Montalto Reliquary*, and the *Holy Thorn Reliquary* from the British Museum. However, these collections consisted predominantly of medium- and small-scale items; most frequently these sophisticated, minute things were meant to be taken out of their chests and held in the hand for connoisseurial examination with tender, fondling touch. The sensory experience of these objects was supposed to provide a primarily corporeal pleasure, before the religious, political or any other roles were considered.

III.1.3. Devotional beads and nuts

The Late Middle Ages developed a phenomenon of micro-carving. In the Southern Netherlands, the supreme refinement and technical skill of craftsmen enabled them to obtain minute forms in wood, such as small altar-pieces, ciboria, tabernacles, religious amulets and devotional artefacts [figs. 169–170], including prayer-nuts or rosary beads [figs. 171–197].¹¹⁴

114 K. Dingelstedt, *Betnuß*, in *Reallexikon zur Deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, vol. II, Stuttgart 1948, pp. 371–377; S.J. Romanelli, *South Netherlandish Boxwood Devotional Sculpture, 1475–1530*, dissertation, Columbia University, New York 1992; F. Scholten, R.L. Falkenburg, *A Sense of Heaven: 16th century boxwood carvings for private devotion*, exh. cat., Warburg Institute, London – Henry Moore Institute, Leeds 1999; J. Lowden, J. Cherry, *Medieval ivories and works of art: the Thomson Collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Seattle 2008; E. Wetter, *Zwei spätmittelalterliche Betnüsse aus den südlichen Niederlanden*, (Monographien der Abegg-Stiftung 15), Abegg-Stift,



Fig. 169: Workshop from Brabant, the miniature *Triptych of the Crucifixion*, boxwood, 1500–1515, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.453)



Fig. 170: Workshop from Brabant, talisman in the shape of a coffin with an image of *Dives in Hell* – the corpse of the rich man from the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, boxwood, 6.2 × 2.1cm, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Ruth Blumka in honor of Ashton Hawkins, 1985 (85.136)

Riggisberg 2011; *Small Wonders: Gothic Boxwood Miniatures*, ed. by L. Ellis, A. Suda, The Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto 2016; *Small Wonders: Late Gothic Boxwood Microcarvings from the Low Countries*, ed. by F. Scholten, with contributions by F. Scholten, R. Falkenburg, I. Reesing, A. Suda, B. Drake Boehm, P. Dandridge, L. Ellis, exh. cat., Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto – The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, New York – Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2016–2017, Amsterdam 2016 (see on-line: <https://boxwood.ago.ca/publication/small-wonders-late-gothic-boxwood-micro-carvings-low-countries>); *The Boxwood Project*, website of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, <https://boxwood.ago.ca> (2016–2017); *Prayer Nuts, Private Devotion and Early Modern Art Collecting*, ed. by E. Wetter and F. Scholten, with contributions by L. Ellis, R. Falkenburg, E.M. Kavalier, I. Reesing, F. Scholten, J.C. Smith, A. Suda, I. M. Veldman, E. Wetter, Riggisberger Berichte 22, Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg 2017; J. Spicer, “Miniature Mysteries: New Proposals on the Handling, Creation, and Authentication of Late Medieval Prayer Nuts,” *Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 2018, pp. 79–86.

These nuts were most commonly made from boxwood, and sometimes from beech wood or palm trees. Their scale is striking, as they measure on average between 4 and 7cm, but represent crowded compositions in some instances featuring more than twenty figures. The making of these objects was utterly laborious and painstaking, requiring unparalleled dexterity and patience. Their iconography encompasses various biblical scenes such as the Annunciation, Nativity, Adoration of the Magi, Prayer in the Garden, Road to Calvary, Crucifixion, Lamentation, Pietà, Resurrection, Last Judgment, Mass of St. Gregory and episodes from the lives of saints. At times they were mounted in silver or kept in casings or caskets, such as the examples now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam [figs. 173–174].



Fig. 171: Devotional nut, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.474) – closed



Fig. 172: Devotional nut, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.474) – open



Fig. 173: Adam Dirksz. (Adam Theodrici), devotional nut of Eewert Jansz. van Bleiswick, with a copper case and red velvet pouch, c. 1500–1525, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, BK-1981-1 and BK-1981-1-B



Fig. 174: Brabant workshop from the early sixteenth century, devotional nut in a silver case and a storing box, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, BK-2010-16

Elaborate prayer beads such as these survive in a number of collections including The Metropolitan Museum in New York, Cleveland Museum of Art, Ontario Gallery of Art in Toronto, Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, British Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Schnütgen Museum in Cologne, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg and Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen. Their current dispersal between various European institutions confirms that they were exported from the Netherlands and circulated widely within early modern commercial networks. Adam Dirksz. (Adam Theodrici), the master from Brabant, specialised in the production of these micro-carvings from the end of the fifteenth century until 1530. A group amounting to eighty prayer beads is attributed to his workshop or workshops from his milieu.¹¹⁵ However, there were various other Netherlandish workshops which created this type of artefacts, though with lesser skill and precision. This art of micro-carving

115 Adam Dirksz. (Adam Theodrici) as presumed carver of the prayer beads and micro-objects or entrepreneur of a huge workshop (workshops?): J. Leeuwenberg, "De gebedsnoot van Eewert Jansz van Bleiswick en andere werken van Adam Dirksz.," in: *Miscellanea Jozef Dwyerger. Bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis der Nederlanden*, Gent 1968, pp. 614–624; F. Scholten, "A prayer nut in a silver housing by 'Adam Dirckz.,"' *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 59, 2011, pp. 322–347; F. Scholten, *Handzaam verzamelen*, Amsterdam 2011, pp. 11–13; *1100–1600*, ed. by F. Scholten, collection catalogue, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2015, cat. no. 57; F. Scholten, "The Boxwood Carvers of the Late Gothic Netherlands," in: *Small Wonders...*, pp. 12–78, especially pp. 24–35.

flourished between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries because of the cult of the rosary, avidly promoted by the Dominicans since 1470. From the *claustrum* of the Upper Rhine monasteries, where it was developed between 1409 and 1435, the devotion to the rosary was transmitted towards the city and the middle class, as well as to the elites and the Habsburg family.¹¹⁶ An earlier tradition of repeating the *pater noster* existed before the formulation of the prayer, and it used less sophisticated strings of beads (such as the one depicted in the *Arnolfini Portrait* by Jan van Eyck) [fig. 500] than later more luxurious types of rosaries. In the illumination from the *Hours of Mary of Burgundy* (1477, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857, fol. 43v), there appears a new type of string with an elaborate bead, clearly identifiable as a devotional and meditative tool [fig. 175].

116 **Rosary prayer in the Late Middle Ages: 500 Jahre Rosenkranz...**; A. Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages*, Pennsylvania State University Press 1997; J.D. Miller, *Beads and Prayers: The Rosary in History and Devotion*. London–New York 2002; *Der Rosenkranz. Andacht, Geschichte, Kunst*; M. Jäger, *Mit Bildern beten: Bildrosenkränze, Wundenringe, Stundengebetsanhänger (1413–1600). Andachtsschmuck im Kontext spätmittelalterlicher und frühneuzeitlicher Frömmigkeit*, dissertation, University of Gießen 2011 (<http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2014/10910/pdf/JaegerMoritz-2012-06-05.pdf>); his, “Bild für Bild, Perle für Perle, Finger für Finger. Der Rosenkranz als teils inneres, teils äußeres Bildsystem,” in: *Das Bild im Plural. Mehrteilige Bildformen zwischen Mittelalter und Gegenwart*, ed. by D. Ganz, F. Thürlemann, Berlin 2010, pp. 201–216; his, “Das Rosenkranzgebet. Texte, Bilder und Objekte aus niedersächsischen Frauenklöstern,” in: *Rosenkränze und Seelengärten – Einblicke in Büchersammlungen aus niedersächsischen Frauenklöstern*, ed. by B.-J. Kruse, exh. cat., Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel 2013, pp. 100–110.



Fig. 175: Master of Mary of Burgundy, illumination of *The Nailing to the Cross* from the *Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, 1477, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857, fol. 43v



Fig. 176: Martin Schongauer, *Portrait of a Young Lady*, c. 1478, Kreuzlingen, Sammlung Heinz Kisters



Fig. 177: Workshop of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen, *Portrait of Jan Gerritsz. van Egmond van de Nijenburg*, c. 1518, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, SK-A-3838

Nonetheless, the wide dissemination of prayer nuts and beads was not exclusively linked with the agenda of promoting a new form of piety. These fascinating, carved micro-objects created by the Netherlandish artists c. 1470–1530 became a clear symbol of their patrons' status and wealth. Various paintings depict the way in which the nuts were worn and presented, for instance the *Portrait of a Young Lady* by Martin Schongauer, from the collection of Heinz Kisters in Kreuzlingen, dated c. 1478; the *Portrait of Jan Gerritsz. van Egmond van de Nijenburg* from 1518, painted in the workshop of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum; Paris, Louvre; St. Petersburg, Hermitage; Berlin, private collection and other versions); the *Portrait of Claus Stalburg de Rijke* c. 1526 by Conrad Faber von Creuznach (Casteel Huis Bergh); and many others [figs. 176–177]. At times, according to traditional accounts, the paternoster beads were believed to have healing and quasi-magical properties. Some contained mixtures from pharmacies or mineral ingredients, in particular olfactory substances. According to a post-mortem inventory (1377) the young Mary of France, daughter of Charles V of France, had among her possessions a *paternoster* filled with ambergris; her father in 1380 had prayer beads with musk, favoured also by Charles the Bad, King of Navarre (mentioned in his will of 1386) and King René d'Anjou (the object is documented in 1432). In 1300,

Constance of Sicily, Queen of Aragon, owned a string of beads filled with labdanum, resin obtained from shrubs of *Cistus ladaniferus* and *Cistus creticus*, which gave balsamic and amber aroma.¹¹⁷ This quest for smelling substances partially stimulated the demand for boxwood prayer beads from between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Boxwood has a distinctive and strong smell because of the essential oils, while its extract had wide medicinal properties. However, the most important reasons for the selection of this type of wood were its material and technical properties. Large and old boxwood bush had been appreciated for centuries for the compact, hard and durable qualities of its wood. It was used in intarsia panels that decorated expensive furniture. Boxwood was also used in woodcutting and in the production of musical instruments. The material ensured the durability of the object, whilst enabling minute, decorative details to be carved in deep relief without the risk of breaking or damaging the elements. Thus, it proved particularly suitable for micro-carving [fig. 178].

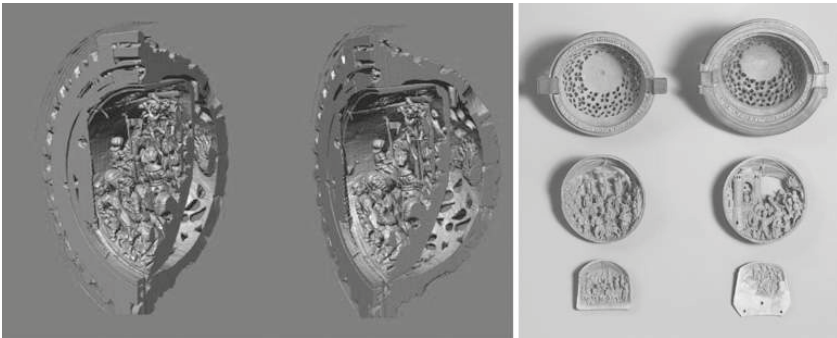


Fig. 178: Making technique of devotional nuts. 3D visualization of the inside of the nut from the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (BK-2010-16), synchrotron-based X-ray fluorescence microscopy. The nut from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan 1917, 17.190.473) dismantled into separate layers

The prayer beads functioned predominantly as examples of supreme artistic skill and virtuoso carving techniques. They became objects to admire and play with, as they again appealed to the sense of touch. They encouraged physical manipulation in a number of ways. First, they had to be extracted from a case or box. After this, they were meant to be turned around so that the owner could read the pious inscriptions carved on the exterior. To give just one example: the boxwood bead from the Metropolitan Museum in

117 R.W. Lightbown, *Medieval European Jewellery*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London 1992, chapter *Rosary beads*.

New York (Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan 1917, inv. no. 17.190.473), which measures 6.8 x 6.9 x 6.3cm [fig. 179], includes an inscription encouraging the beholder to open the object and to meditate on the images represented inside: *Attendite, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus* (“Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me” – Lamentations 1:12) and *Levemus corda nostra cum manibus ad Dominum in caelos* (Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens – Lamentations 3:41). The first passage speaks about the need to carefully look and contemplate one’s vision, whilst the second stresses the importance of not only lifting up one’s hands during prayer, as well as encouraging the lifting of the object itself. After these initial physical interactions with the object the beholder had to find a way of opening the bead, either by removing the latch or through twisting off the upper half of the nut. Once the owner opened the bead s/he saw two detailed, multi-figured scenes from the Passion: the Road to Calvary and the Crucifixion, carved in deep relief. The beholder had to look at all the minute forms from up close to notice the details – this meant that the nut had to be lifted up and brought close to her/his eyes to enable the viewer to follow all the scenes and motifs. Moreover, the owner was to read all the inscriptions from the Book of Lamentations, the Gospels and the hymn: *Susceperunt autem Iesum et eduxerunt et bajulans sibi crucem* (“And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of the Skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha” – John 19:16–17, the text according to the hymn *Vexilla regis* sung on Good Friday) and *O crux ave, spes unica, hoc passionis tempore, auge piis justitiam, reisque dona veniam* (Hail, Cross, of hopes the most sublime! Now in this mournful Passion time...– hymn *Vexilla regis* 8).



Fig. 179: Brabant Workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan 1917 (17.190.473)

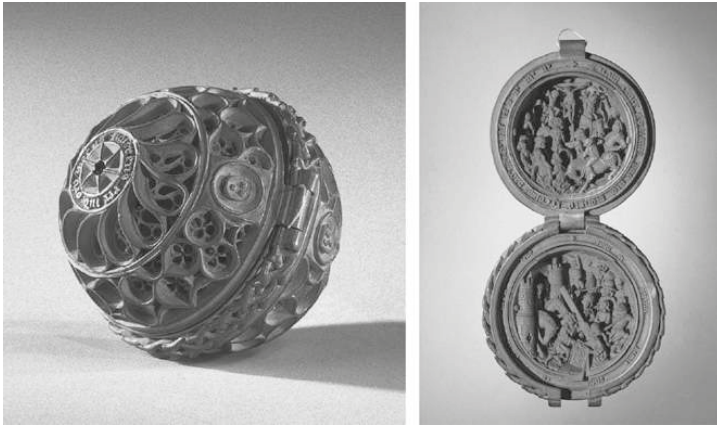


Fig. 180: Adam Dirksz. (Adam Theodrici), devotional nut of Eewert Jansz. van Bleiswick, c. 1500–1515, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. BK-1981-1

A similar representational scheme with inscriptions can be seen in the bead from the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, dated to c. 1510–15 and attributed to Adam Dirksz.’s workshop, made for Eewert Jansz. van Bleiswick probably from Delft or other town of Nord-Holland (inv. no. BK-1981-1, diameter 4.6cm) [fig. 180], which includes in the lower section the Carrying of the Cross, and in the upper section the Crucifixion.¹¹⁸ The accompanying texts read: “Tuam cruce[m] adoramus d[omi]ne via[m] gloriosa[m] recolimus passio[n]es q[ui] pas[sus] es[t] p[ro] n[obi]s m[ortu]us n[obi]s” (We adore thy cross, O Lord, we commemorate the praiseworthy road of your suffering, which you undertook for us; for us you died), and “Jugu[m] ec[ce] meum suave est et onus meu[m] leve” (For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light). A different prayer bead from the workshop of Adam Dirksz. in the same museum (inv. no. BK-2010-16-1) [fig. 174], in a silver housing and measuring 4.8cm in diameter, shows stories from the life of the Virgin: The Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi. The first nut was kept in a copper case inside a red velvet pouch (inv. no. BK-1981-1-A and BK-1981-1-B), while the latter was kept in a wooden box with drawers (inv. no. BK-2010-16-2); both cases have survived to our times in the collection of the the Rijksmuseum [figs. 173–174].

118 For the Amsterdam beads BK-1981-1 and BK-2010-16 see F. Scholten, “A prayer nut in a silver housing by ‘Adam Dirckz.’” *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 59, 2011, pp. 322–347; *1100–1600*, ed. by F. Scholten, collection catalogue, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2015, cat. no. 57; *Small Wonders...*, cat. nos. 15 and resp. 12.



Fig. 181: Adam Dirksz. (Adam Theodrici), devotional nut, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe (photo: © Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, Public domain)



Fig. 182: Brabant workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, London, British Museum, WB 238

Similarly, by Adam Dirksz.'s workshop is an example from Hamburg (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, inv. no. 1878.134, 4.1cm in diameter), carved in beech wood, which depicts a multi-figured scene of the Calvary juxtaposed with the Mass of St. Gregory [fig. 181].¹¹⁹ The prayer nut from the British Museum in London (inv. no. WB 238, 4.6cm in diameter) in

¹¹⁹ *Spiegel der Seligkeit. Privates Bild und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter*, exh. cat. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 2000, cat. no. 109.

its upper section shows the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi with the Presentation at the Temple in the background, while in the lower section there is a Pietà group being adored by two saints – James the Greater and Ursula, the patrons of the owners – identifiable as Jacob van Borsele, Lord of Gouda, and his wife Ursula de Foreest thanks to their family coat of arms, placed above the Pietà [fig. 182]. Another prayer bead from the British Museum belongs to the same group and includes the Vision of St. Hubert and the Enthronement of an anonymous bishop (inv. no. WB. 237, diameter 4.3cm).

Various prayer beads have even more elaborate structures, resembling small-scale tabernacles, with hinged flaps or doors revealing additional views. The beholder read sequentially the inscriptions and viewed first the scenes on the internal flaps and on the doors. For instance, in a different boxwood nut from the Metropolitan Museum (Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan 1917, inv. no. 17.190.474, diameter c. 6.4cm) [figs. 171–172, 183–185], after reading the same inscriptions as in the previous example placed on the exterior of the bead, he/ she would look at a circular plaquette inside with a scene of the Agony in the Garden in the upper section and the Kiss of Judas with St. Peter slashing off the ear of Malchus in the lower section. The shut wings of the bead's upper hemisphere show Christ stripped of His garments and soldiers casting lots for His robes [fig. 184]. Only after removing the plaquette and opening the wings are the final scenes from the Passion revealed: Christ before Pilate and the Crucifixion, preceded by two scenes on the reverse, namely the Carrying of the Cross and the Lamentation [fig. 185]. The scenes are surrounded by additional inscriptions – on the plaquette: “Per pacem Criste trahit [*trahit* instead of *tradit*] hiis te proditor iste,” while on the rims of the hemispheres: “Nos Pilatus condemnamus Iesum flagellandum in monte Calvario crucifigi et in altum elevari,” and again “O crux ave spe[s] vin [unica], hoc passionis tempore, auge piis iusticiam reis,” (from the Good Friday hymn *Vexilla regis*).



Fig. 183: Brabant Workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.474) – closed, showing visible text on the exterior



Fig. 184: Devotional nut (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.474) first opening of the hemispheres, and with a circular plaquette removed from the lower hemisphere



Fig. 185: Devotional nut (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.474) second opening, with with a circular plaquette removed from the lower hemisphere, and with the wings of the upper hemisphere opened

The third example from this collection (Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan 1917, inv. no. 17.190.475; diameter 5.2cm) [figs. 186–190] includes Adam and

Eve and the Tree of Knowledge shown on the closed wings of the upper half [fig. 187], which when open revealed the Journey to Nazareth and the Nativity (left wing); and the Journey and the Adoration of the Magi (in the centre of the bead), and the Presentation at the Temple (right wing), whilst in the lower half the central scene of the Crucifixion is accompanied by the Agony in the Garden, The Arrest and St. Peter Slashing off the Ear of Malchus [figs. 188–190].

The example from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (inv. no. 4206, diameter 6.2cm) [fig. 191] has in the lower half the scene of Christ before Pilate, and in the upper a crowded Crucifixion with the Flagellation in the background, while on the wings there is the Carrying of the Cross, the Descent from the Cross, the Lamentation and the Entombment. When we open the nut WB 236 in British Museum in London [figs. 192–196],¹²⁰ we encounter the circular flap-cover decorated with the scene of the Annunciation, and on its reverse with the scenes of the Nativity and the Circumcision, the Presentation at the Temple and Christ among the Doctors. When the flap is lifted the viewer sees in the lower half the Road to Calvary and in the upper the Crucifixion, flanked by reliefs on the wings with the Old Testament typological prefiguration scene of the Brass Serpent and the New Testament scene of the Lamentation.



Fig. 186: Brabant workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.475)

120 H. Tait, *Catalogue of the Waddesdon Bequest in the British Museum*, vol. I: *The Jewels*, London 1986, pp. 51–56; D. Thornton, *A Rothschild Renaissance: Treasures from the Waddesdon Bequest*, British Museum, London 2015, pp. 162–171.



Fig. 187: Devotional nut (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.475) first opening, after opening of the hemispheres, showing the shut wings of the bead's upper hemisphere



Fig. 188: Devotional nut (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.475) first opening, after opening of the hemispheres – showing the carved scene of the lower hemisphere



Fig. 189: Devotional nut (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.475) second opening, with the open wings of the bead's upper hemisphere



Fig. 190: Devotional nut (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.475) second opening – full view



Fig. 191: Brabant workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



Fig. 192: Brabant workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, London, British Museum, WB 236



Fig. 193: Devotional nut (London, British Museum, WB 236) – verso of the flap
(© British Museum, London)



Fig. 194: Devotional nut (London, British Museum, WB 236) – open, with the lower hemisphere shut



Fig. 195: Devotional nut (London, British Museum, WB 236) – open, view of the sculptural decoration of the upper hemisphere



Fig. 196: Devotional nut (London, British Museum, WB 236) – fully open

It was in this way that the small spheres could sequentially narrate a long and detailed sacred narrative. This methodology revealed the story in a specific order of scenes, imposing on the beholder a fixed set of physical manipulations. The object itself forced the faithful to read and look in a specific way – view after view, scene after scene, movement after movement. Thus, the question arises: who was the agent in these

operations: the devotee or the object? Who manipulated whom: did man direct the object or was it the object which conditioned man? Finally, who developed the specific devotion to the rosary: faithful devotees or the thing itself?

Should these objects really be considered prayer beads? Was the eliciting and guiding of prayer their primary function? The ordered views and the sequences of scenes, introduced by the accompanying texts, seem to suggest a certain mode of prayer based on the manipulation of the bead. What remains unclear is which prayer was prompted by these specific objects?¹²¹

Individual scenes – which mostly follow the Biblical chronology – by no means illustrate the sequence of the rosary and do not reflect its characteristic division, which necessarily stimulated the contemplation of the three sets of mysteries of the Virgin, namely the joyful, the sorrowful and the glorious mysteries. In the examples of the prayer beads discussed above, there are individual or group scenes that belong to one or another mystery. The joyful mysteries included in the reliefs are the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Presentation at the Temple and Christ among the Doctors (the Visitation is omitted); there are also four sorrowful mysteries, namely the Agony in the Garden, the Flagellation, the Carrying of the Cross and the Road to Calvary, and the Crucifixion (but we do not see the Crowning of Thorns); from the glorious mysteries only the Resurrection is represented, and there is no image of the Ascension of Christ, Pentecost, or the Assumption or the Coronation of the Virgin. Never is the iconography fully explored, nor even a specific set of illustrations to a single mystery, as formulated in the Dominican rosary prayer. None of the surviving nuts includes a thematic juxtaposition that belongs to a specific mystery. Moreover, various scenes carved on the surfaces of these beads do not belong to the mysteries of the rosary, such as the Adoration of the Magi, the Circumcision, the Lamentation, the Entombment, the Last Judgment, while others, namely the Kiss of Judas, the Arrest and St. Peter Slashing off the Ear of Malchus, constitute merely an extension of the context of the Agony in the Garden, one of the sorrowful mysteries. Furthermore, utterly unrelated to the rosary are the scenes of the Mass of St. Gregory, the Vision of St. Hubert or the enthronement of a bishop (the enthronement of St. Hubert after his consecration by Pope Sergius?) an anonymous bishop included in different examples of the prayer beads [fig. 197].

121 I am grateful to Professor Katarzyna Zalewska-Lorkiewicz for drawing my attention to this interpretative ambiguity.



Fig. 197: Brabant Workshop, early sixteenth century, devotional nut, London, British Museum, WB 237 – open, scenes of the *Vision of St. Hubert* in the upper hemisphere and the *Enthronement of the Bishop* (*Enthronement of St Hubert following consecration by Pope Sergius?*) in the lower hemisphere

The doctrines and the fundamental tenets of the Catholic faith constitute the thematic framework of individual beads. Firstly, the Incarnation, depicted through a sequence of scenes: the Nativity – the Adoration of the Magi (Rijksmuseum); or the Nativity – the Adoration of the Magi – the Presentation at the Temple – the Lamentation (British Museum WB 238). Secondly, the Incarnation (showed with a story from Christ's childhood) and the Salvation of Mankind through the Passion, explored in two sequences: the Fall – the Journey to Nazareth – the Nativity – the Journey and the Adoration of the Magi – the Presentation at the Temple and the Agony in the Garden – the Arrest – the Crucifixion (Metropolitan Museum 17.190.475) or alternatively the Annunciation – the Nativity – the Circumcision – the Presentation at the Temple – Christ among the Doctors and the Road to Calvary – the Crucifixion – the Lamentation (British Museum WB 236). Thirdly, salvation through the Passion is shown through: the Road to Calvary – the Crucifixion (Metropolitan Museum 17.190.473; Bleiswick's prayer bead from the Rijksmuseum) or the Kiss of Judas – the Arrest – Christ before Pilate – the Carrying of the Cross – the Crucifixion – the Lamentation (Metropolitan Museum 17.190.474) or Christ before Pilate – the Flagellation – the Crucifixion – the Descent from the Cross – the Lamentation – the Entombment (Kunsthistorisches Museum). Fourthly, salvation through the Passion is combined with the dogma of the

True Presece (the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist), illustrated in a sequence of the Crucifixion– the Mass of St. Gregory (Hamburg). Finally, the fifth thematic framework is organised according to ecclesiological thought, as in the sequence of the Vision of St. Hubert – the Enthronement of the Bishop (British Museum WB 237). The Incarnation, the Passion (salvation given through Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross), the Eucharist and the importance of Holy Church, as represented in Netherlandish carved prayer beads, constitute the fundamental tenets of the Catholic faith.

It is clear therefore that at least some nuts clearly made no reference to the rosary (such as the example from the British Museum, inv. no. WB 237), while others can be loosely associated with that type of prayer (the bead from Hamburg). Only some examples seem to be reflecting the specific prayer, such as the Passion nuts (Metropolitan Museum 17.190.473, Rijksmuseum, Kunsthistorisches Museum) or beads with the story of the Incarnation and Christ’s Childhood narrated in relation to the Passion (British Museum WB 236, Metropolitan Museum 17.190.475). The complex physical manipulations, the opening and dismantling of the beads, were ill-suited for the meditative character of the rosary. In short, the nuts are not rosary beads! Moreover, the sequence of the scenes included in their decoration does not seem to be related to any other known prayer prayed by rote or repetition, and certainly not the hours or the breviary (The Divine Office). They could not have assisted any kind of prayer based on a set routine.

The Netherlandish beads therefore had a different function: they were meditative tools, which assisted the prolonged contemplation of specific tenets of the Catholic faith and episodes from the Bible, from which only some were selected for consideration during the rosary. Were these meditations additional components of the previously said rosary? Did they constitute the concluding element of the specific prayer or were they an independent stage in the meditation and contemplation of the fundamental tenets of the Catholic faith? For now these questions remain without clear answers. However, these complex and intricate objects could have been didactic visualisations of sacred history and vital doctrines. The handling and manually demanding revealing of progressive views within the object, in order to access the final scene, namely the Crucifixion or the Lamentation (or the Entombment), led to the illustration of the two fundamental doctrines: namely that of salvation through the Cross, and the Incarnation (and therefore a display of the mortal physicality and human nature of Christ, God Incarnate). The clear didactic display inspired empathy (*compassio*) and the identification of the faithful with Christ, through attempting to become like Him (*conformitas*); two attitudes avidly promoted in late medieval piety. This constituted the agency of these meditative beads as religious objects.

Their agency could be seen also in a different and perhaps more important dimension, one that resulted from their unparalleled, manifested complexity.

They became jewels, worn by their owners when they sat in celebratory robes for their portraits. It is not accidental that the owners known to us belong to the urban middle class, or low-ranking knights, or noblemen from the cities. The beads – used for meditation, and not for prayer- functioned as testimonies of the devotion of the wealthy middle class within Northern European society. At the same time, the beads were clear manifestations of their ambitions and aspirations to attain higher social status. They were sophisticated and certainly expensive toys, and to play with similarly luxurious objects was always the privilege of the elites, once only at the court, but now also among the urban middle classes and patricians.

III.1.4. Small paintings and micro-altarpieces

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries small paintings and altarpieces became an integral part of the domestic milieu of the growing middle classes, and a part of the private repertoire of portable objects. Their role was primarily devotional, but on numerous occasions they acted as talismans – protective amulets – always kept close by their owners.

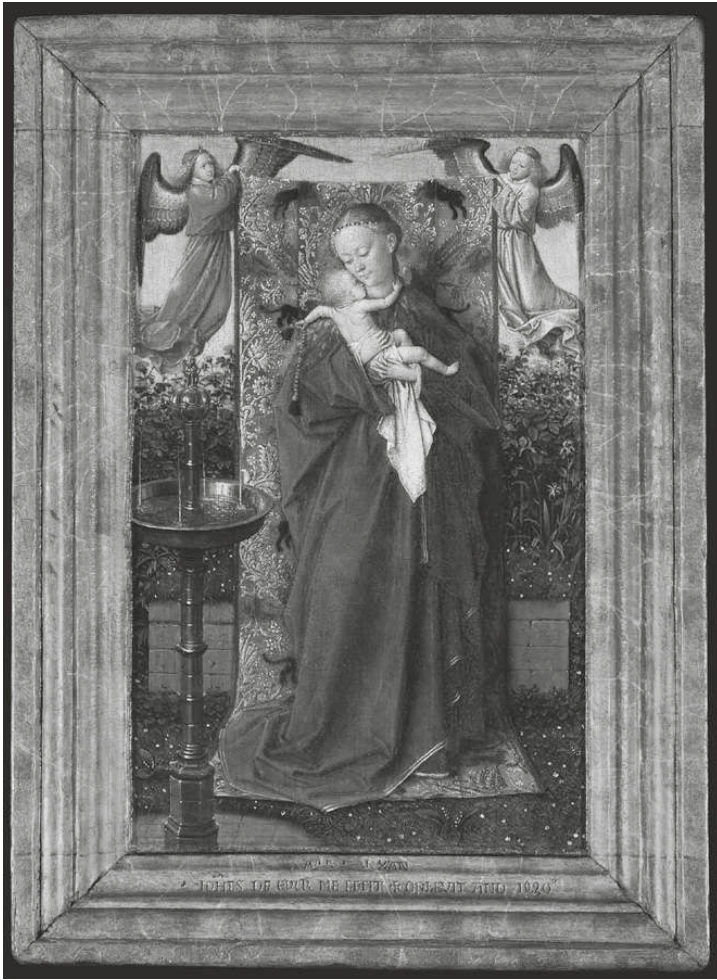


Fig. 198: Jan van Eyck, *Madonna at the Fountain*, 1439, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

Jan van Eyck and his workshop clearly specialised in the production of these sophisticated and skilfully executed, small-scale painted objects. *Madonna at the Fountain* from 1439 (Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) [fig. 198] measures 19 x 12.5cm (with the original frame 24.9 x 18.2cm); a workshop version of the painting in the Hague (Mauritshuis) – 21.3 x 17.2cm

(without the later frame).¹²² The *Stigmatization of St. Francis* (Philadelphia Museum of Art) measures 12.4 x 14.6 – a late workshop painting – repeats on a the smaller scale the composition from Turin (Galleria Sabauda; 29.3 x 33.4cm) [figs. 204].¹²³ Similarly, *St. Jerome in His Study* (1442, Detroit Institute of Art) is a tiny panel with dimensions 20.5 x 13.5cm (painted surface: 19.9

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- 122 *Madonna at the Fountain* by Jan van Eyck: O. Kerber, “Jan van Eycks Madonna am Brunnen,” *Pantheon* 28, 1970, pp. 21–31; E. Schiltz, *De Madonna met Kind aan de levensbron van Jan van Eyck*, Antwerp 1972; E. Dhanens, *Hubert en Jan van Eyck*, Antwerp 1980 (in English: New York 1980; in German: Königstein i. T. 1980, in French: Antwerp 1980), pp. 295–300; L. Wuyts, “De Madonna bij de Fontein,” in: *Oude Meesters in het Koninklijk Museum*, Antwerp 1980, no. 6; L. Silver, “Fountain and Source: A Rediscovered Eyckian Icon,” *Pantheon* 41, 2, 1983, pp. 95–104; P. Vandenbroeck, *Catalogue of 14th and 15th Century Painting*, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp 1985, pp. 174–178; P. Vandenbroeck, “‘Madonna at the Fountain’: An Icon of Tenderness,” *Restoration / Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp 2*, 2001/2002, no. 1, pp. 4–7; L. Depuydt-Elbaum, “‘The Madonna at the Fountain’ by Jan van Eyck,” *Restoration / Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp 2*, 2001/2002, no. 1, pp. 8–20; P. Vandenbroeck, “The Second Version of ‘The Madonna at the Fountain,’” *Restoration / Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp 2*, 2001/2002, no. 1, pp. 21–24; “Bibliography,” *Restoration / Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp 2*, 2001/2002, no. 1, pp. 25–26; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck und seine Zeit. Flämische Meister und der Süden. 1430–1530*, ex. cath., Groeningemuseum Brugge, Stuttgart 2002 (in Netherlandish: *De eeuw van Van Eyck. De Vlaamse Primitieven en het Zuiden, 1430–1530*, Ghent–Amsterdam 2002, in English: *The Age of Van Eyck: The Mediterranean World and Early Netherlandish Painting, 1430–1530*, London 2002), cat. no. 27; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck*, Hong Kong–Cologne–London et al. 2008; p. 66; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, p. 197 (with bibliography in the notes); S. Weppelmann, S. Pénot, E. Oberthaler, K. Schmitz-von Ledebur, *Jan van Eyck. “Als Ich Can,”* exh. cat. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna 2019; M. Martens, T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck*, companion book for the exhibition “Van Eyck: An Optical Revolution” held at the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent, London 2020, passim (hereinafter referred to as *Van Eyck 2020*).
- 123 *Two versions of St. Francis’ Stigmatization* by the workshop of Van Eyck (Turin and Philadelphia): *Jan van Eyck: Two Paintings of ‘Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata,’* contributions by: J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer, K. Bé, M.H. Butler, P. Klein, K. Crawford Lubber, J.J. Rishel, M. Smeyers, J. Snyder, and C. Spantigati, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia PA 1997 (with *Annotated Bibliography* on pp. 97–108); K.C. Lubber, “Recognizing Van Eyck,” *Bulletin Philadelphia Museum of Art* 91, 1998, no. 386–387, pp. 1–48; K.C. Lubber, “Patronage and Pilgrimage: Jan van Eyck, the Adornes Family, and Two

x 12.5cm) [fig. 205].¹²⁴ Just as with the *Stigmatization* from Philadelphia, it is painted on paper glued onto a panel – a rather typical technique of executing this type of painting, which links it to manuscript illumination. Undoubtedly, these works resembled book miniatures, given their form and format.

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- Paintings of ‘Saint Francis’ in Portraiture,” *Bulletin Philadelphia Museum of Art* 91, Spring 1998, pp. 24–37; N. Geirnaert, “Anselm Adornes and His Daughters: Owners of Two Paintings of Saint Francis by Jan van Eyck?,” in: *Investigating Jan van Eyck: Essays delivered as papers at the Jan van Eyck Symposium held at the National Gallery on 13–14 March 1998 / The National Gallery*, ed. by S. Foister, S. Jones, D. Cool, Turnhout 2000, pp. 163–168; P. Nuttall, “Jan van Eyck’s Paintings in Italy,” in: *Investigating Jan van Eyck...*, pp. 169–182; *El renacimiento mediterráneo...*, cat. no. 2; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck und seine Zeit...*, nos. 28–29, 45, 121; P. Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence...*, p. 136 and passim; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck* (2008), pp. 71–72; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 213–216, 508–509 (with bibliography in the notes); *Van Eyck* 2020, passim.
- 124 **St. Jerome in Detroit by Jan van Eyck and/or his workshop:** E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origin and Charakter*, Cambridge/Mass., Harvard University Press 1953, pp. 189–190; E. Panofsky, “A Letter to Saint Jerome: A Note on the Relationship between Petrus Christus and Jan van Eyck,” in: *Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Greene*, ed. by D. Miner, Princeton 1954, pp. 102–108; E. Hall, “Cardinal Albergati, St. Jerome and the Detroit Van Eyck,” *Art Quarterly* 31, 1968, pp. 3–34; E. Hall, “More about the Detroit Van Eyck: The Astrolabe, the Congress of Arras and Cardinal Albergati,” *Art Quarterly* 34, 1971, pp. 181–201; Ch. Sterling, “Jan van Eyck avant 1432,” *Revue de l’Art* 33, 1976, pp. 7–82; P.H. Jolly, *Jan van Eyck and St. Jerome: A Study of Eyckian Influence on Colantonio and Antonello da Messina in Quattrocento Naples*, dissertation, University of Pennsylvania 1976, passim; E. Dhanens, *Hubert and Jan van Eyck*, p. 370; A. Garzelli, “Sulla fortuna del Girolamo medico del van Eyck nell’arte fiorentina del Quattrocento,” in: *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Roberto Salvini*, ed. by C. de Benedictis, Firenze 1984, pp. 347–353; M. Rohlmann, *Auftragskunst und Sammlerbild...*, pp. 96–100; M.W. Ainsworth, M.P.J. Martens, *Petrus Christus*, (Netherlandish edition of the exhibition catalogue *Petrus Christus, Renaissance Master of Bruges*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1994), Ghent–New York 1995, cat. no. 1; B. Heller, L.P. Stodulski, “Recent Scientific Investigation of the Detroit Saint Jerome,” in: *Petrus Christus in Renaissance Bruges: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, New York–Turnhout 1995, pp. 131–142; E. Hall, “The Detroit ‘Saint Jerome’ in Search of Its Painter,” *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 72, 2, 1998, pp. 10–37; B. Heller, L.P. Stodulski, “Saint Jerome in the Laboratory: Scientific Evidence and the Enigmas of an Eyckian Panel,” *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 72, 2, 1998, pp. 38–55; M. Rohlmann, “Flanders and Italy, Flanders and Florence: Early Netherlandish Painting in Italy and Its Particular Influence



Fig. 199: Petrus Christus, *The Head of Christ in the Crown of Thorns*, c. 1445, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Lilian S. Timken, 1959 (60.71)

on Florentine Art: An Overview,” in: *Italy and the Low Countries – Artistic Relations: the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by V.M. Schmidt, G.J. van der Sman et al., (Istituto Universitario Olandese di Storia dell’Arte, Firenze), Florence 1999, pp. 39–67, esp. pp. 45, 48, 50, 53; B. Aikema in: *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the time of Bellini, Dürer and Titian*, ed. by B. Aikema, B.L. Brown et al., exh. cat., Palazzo Grassi, Venice 1999, cat. no. 15; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck und seine Zeit...*, cat. no. 30; P. Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence...*, p. 107; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck* (2008), pp. 76–78; J. Bogers in: *Firenze e gli antichi Paesi Bassi 1430–1530...*, cat. no. 1; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 216–217, 510 (with bibliography in the notes 338–343); *Van Eyck* 2020, passim.



Fig. 200: Netherlandish master, *Triptych of the Crucifixion*, c. 1420, Essen, Kunstsammlung der Gallinat-Bank AG



Fig. 201: Jan van Eyck, *The Virgin in a Church*, 1440?, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 202: Workshop of Rogier van der Weyden, *St. George and the Dragon*, Washington, The National Gallery of Art and *The Virgin and Child Enthroned in a Niche*, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza; c. 1430–1440



Fig. 203: Workshop of Rogier van der Weyden, *Virgin and Child Standing in a Niche* and *St. Catherine*, c. 1452–1455 Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie

In Bruges, after Van Eyck, this niche for painting small-scale panels was taken over by Petrus Christus. *The Head of Christ in the Crown of Thorns* (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art), painted on parchment pasted onto an oak panel, has a miniature format of 14.6 x 10.4cm. The painting known as the *Madonna Exeter* (*Madonna of Jan Vos*; Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) measures 19.5 x 14cm; the *Vir dolorum* at the Birmingham Art Gallery is a mere 11.2 x 8.5cm; lastly the *Virgin of the Dry Tree* (*Madonna van de Droge Boom*; Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza) measures only 14.7 x 12.4cm [figs. 207–209].¹²⁵

The early Netherlandish triptychs and diptychs were also characterised by their small scale. The *Triptych of the Crucifixion* from Essen, dated to c. 1420 (Kunstsammlung der Gallinat-Bank AG) [fig. 200],¹²⁶ measures 35.5 x 56cm when unfolded, and its dimensions are as similarly reduced as the diptychs and triptychs by Van Eyck. Therefore, the master from Bruges continued the small-scale tradition, undoubtedly in response to the long-existing demands of the market. Those expectations were met by works such as the *Annunciation Diptych* (Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza; 38.8 x 46.4cm) [fig. 211] or the *Dresden Triptych* (1437, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister; 33.1 x 55cm) [fig. 482]. *The Virgin in a Church* (1440?, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie; 31 x 14cm) [fig. 201] likely also comes from a small diptych with the portrait of the donor now lost. The paintings by the early workshop of Rogier van der Weyden also once belonged to small triptychs or pendant-diptych paintings: *The Virgin and Child Enthroned in a Niche* (Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza; 14.2 x 10.5cm) and *St. George Fighting the Dragon* (Washington, National Gallery of Art; 14.3 x 10.5cm) and the *Virgin and Child Standing in a Niche* and *St. Catherine* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum; each panel 18.5 x 12cm) [figs. 202–203].

125 M.W. Ainsworth, M.P.J. Martens, *Petrus Christus*, cat. nos. 4, 7, 9, 18. Cf. J.M. Upton, *Petrus Christus: His Place in Fifteenth-Century Flemish Painting*, University Park 1990; A. Ziembka, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 522–525, 530 (with bibliography in the notes).

126 T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck und seine Zeit...*, cat. no. 2.



Fig. 204: Workshop of Jan van Eyck, *Stigmatization of St. Francis*, c. 1445, Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection, 1917–314



Fig. 205: Jan van Eyck and his workshop, *St. Jerome in his Studio*, Detroit Institute of Arts, 25.4

Many on these paintings include references to the donor and owner, which testify to the very personal function of the work as a protective object: a religious talisman or amulet. The *Stigmatization of St. Francis* by the workshop of Van Eyck, now in Philadelphia [fig. 204], shows a clear portrait of a specific person used for the figure of the saint. He is the patron saint of the owner and the guardian of his piety, and consequently, responsible for the salvation of his soul. This image was carried on the body, or kept constantly near, both at home and when travelling; it reminded the wearer of the need for prayer and pious meditation, whilst at the same time guarding them from evil and sin.

St. Jerome in His Study from Detroit [fig. 205] could be both a devotional and a protective image, by bringing to the mind of its owner – probably Cardinal Niccolò Albergati, the general of the Carthusian order and the presbyter of the Roman church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme – the the model saint. It was, an ideal image for the presumed patron to identify himself with – the portrait of the saintly cardinal, penitent and a scholar. St. Jerome embodied all the virtues that Albergati could have hoped for as a Church dignitary, a humble Carthusian, an ascetic and a learned man. It was an ideal image for an Italian educated in humanist circles – the patron of humanists, writers, church dignitaries and hermit monks. The saint called for the development of the virtues of prudence, wisdom, humility, poverty and devotional diligence. Kept always near, he provided a source of constant inspiration and protection for the owner.

The small, portable images of the Virgin probably played a similar role. Their patrons, like the anonymous Italian painted on the wing of the Dresden triptych by Jan van Eyck [fig. 482] (the coat-of-arms suggests the family name of Giustiniani), or the abbot Jan Vos in the Berlin *Madonna Exeter* by Petrus Christus [fig. 206] – sought protection from the Virgin and her Child. The latter example is particularly illuminating because of the historic circumstances of his commission. *Madonna Exeter*¹²⁷ is a miniaturised version of a large altarpiece painting from the workshop of Jan van Eyck of the *Virgin and Child, with Saints and Donor (Madonna of Jan Vos, New York, Frick Collection)* [fig. 207], which was consecrated in 1443 in the Carthusian church at Genadedal, near Bruges.¹²⁸ In 1450, Jan

127 *Madonna Exeter* by Petrus Christus: M.W. Ainsworth, M.P.J. Martens, *Petrus Christus*, Ghent–New York 1995, cat. no. 7; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 21; A. Ziembra, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 522–525; E. Capron, M.W. Ainsworth, T.-H. Borchert, *The Charterhouse of Bruges: Jan Van Eyck, Petrus Christus, and Jan Vos*, exh. cat., The Frick Collection, New York 2018.

128 *Madonna of Jan Vos* from the workshop of Jan van Eyck: M.W. Ainsworth, M.P.J. Martens, *Petrus Christus...*, cat. no. 2. T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 21. See also E. Dhanens, *Hubert and Jan van Eyck*, pp. 369–370; J.M. Upton, *Petrus Christus...* pp. 11–18; M.P.J. Martens, *Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions, ca. 1440–1482*, dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara 1992, pp. 337–340; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck* (2008) p. 72; A. Ziembra, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 212–213; E. Capron, M.W. Ainsworth, T.-H. Borchert, *The Charterhouse of Bruges...*; *Van Eyck* 2020, *passim*.

Vos, the prior of the Charterhouse, moved to lead the Carthusian monastery at Nieuwlicht near Utrecht. Presumably, it was at that time that he ordered a small replica of the painting he had previously commissioned to bring with him to the new site. Perhaps it was used to make another, larger version, described in archival sources, which stood at St. Barbara's altar in Nieuwlicht (she is the one who intercedes for the prior before the Virgin and Child in the panel from Berlin).¹²⁹

129 I deem implausible the assumption of Maryan W. Ainsworth (M.W. Ainsworth, M.P.J. Maartens, *Petrus Christus*, Ghent–New York 1995, cat. no. 7), that *Madonna Exeter* was a version left for exchange in Genadedal, and Vos took to Nieuwlicht the *Virgin and Child, with Saints and Donor* (the one now in the Frick Collection) and placed it above the altar of St. Barbara. The tiny image by no means could fulfil the role of the altarpiece painting neither in Genadedal, nor in Nieuwlicht.

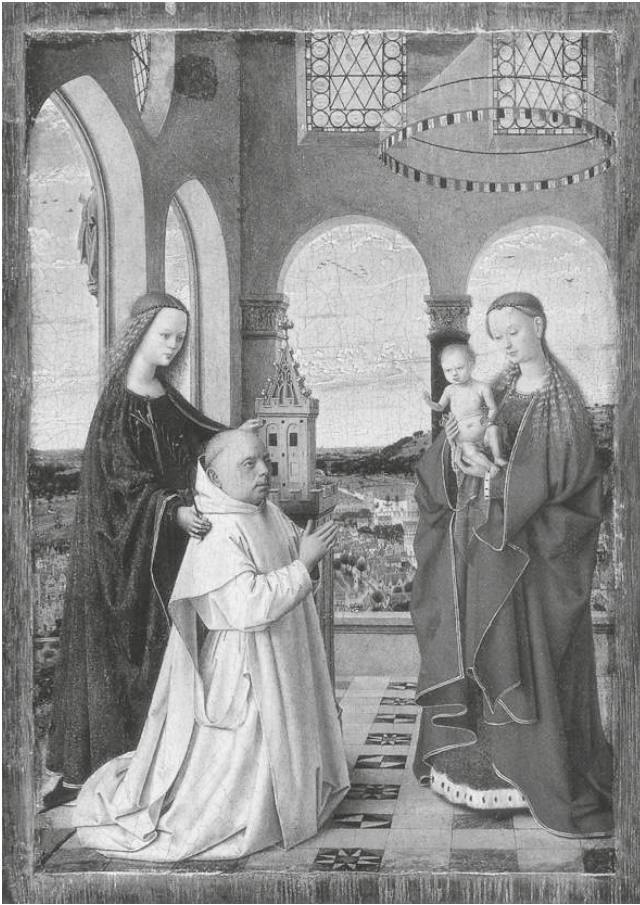


Fig. 206: Petrus Christus, *Madonna Exeter*, c. 1450, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 207: Workshop of Jan van Eyck, *Virgin and Child, with Saints and Donor* (*Madonna of Jan Vos*), New York, Frick Collection, 1954.1.161



Fig. 208: Petrus Christus, *The Virgin of the Dry Tree* (*The Virgin of the Confraternity Onze Lieve Vrouwe van de Droge Boom in Bruges*), c. 1465, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza



Fig. 209: Aelbert Bouts, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, c., ok. 1510, Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Gift of Mary E. Evans and Mrs. John E. Wheeler in memory of Harry Martin Evans, 40–44/4

The *Virgin of the Dry Tree* by Petrus Christus [fig. 208] is a devotional panel, venerated by the elite Confraternity of the Virgin of the Dry Tree (Onze Lieve Vrouwe van de Droge Boom) in Bruges, to which the painter himself belonged.¹³⁰ The image, carried with oneself or kept at home, was a substitute for the miraculous image, a visible sign highlighting its owners' ties with the brotherhood, and at the same time the protective 'holy image,' bound to transfer to the owner the grace and miracles performed by the original painting.

130 Petrus Christus, *Virgin of the Dry Tree*: G. Münzel, "Die Madonna zum durren Baum von Petrus Christus," *Das Münster* 2, 1958, pp. 256–260; H. van der Velden, "Petrus Christus's Our Lady of the Dry Tree," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 60, 1997, pp. 89–110; H. van der Velden, "Petrus Christus' 'Our Lady of the Dry Tree': a Note on the Influence of the Veneration of Images on Early Netherlandish Painting," in: *Memory & Oblivion. Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art Held in Amsterdam, 1–7 September 1996*, ed. by W. Reinink and J. Stumpel, Dordrecht, 1999, pp. 635–636; J. van der Meulen, "Onze Lieve Vrouwe van de Droge Boom in Brugge. Devotiebeeld en literaire traditie," in: *Aan de vruchten kent men de boom. De boom in tekst en beeld in de middeleeuwse Nederlanden*, ed. by B. Baert, V. Fraeters, Leuven 2001, pp. 209–237.

In turn, the presence of specific saints on the wings of small altarpieces – as in the aforementioned paintings from Rogier’s workshop: St. George or St. Catherine [figs. 529–530] may suggest that we are dealing with the name saints or patrons of specific groups (George as an ideal knight) to which the owners belonged. Through their intercession the owner gained the protection of the Virgin and Child depicted on the other panel. Thus, these objects were utterly personal, portable, protective signs: quasi-talismans.

The same function might have been fulfilled by images of Christ. Small-scale images of the Suffering Christ – *Vir dolorum* and *Christ Wearing the Crown of Thorns* by Petrus Christus [fig. 199] or the subsequent small panels and tondi from the workshop of Aelbert Bouts [for instance the tondi of *Christ Wearing the Crown of Thorns* from the Antwerp Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Berlin’s Gemäldegalerie, and Kansas City’s Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, all have diameters between 28 and 30cm) [fig. 209] – which were best suited to be held in the hands, brought closer to the eyes, and thus examined face to face. Christ piercing the viewer with his gaze encouraged the beholder to enter into a close, emotional relationship with Him – to empathise with His pain – and, through revealing the importance of the Passion, He bestowed the assurance of the soul’s salvation. This painting functioned as a personal relic or its reflection in the ‘holy image,’ recalling depictions of the Holy Face.



Fig. 210: French painter, *Small Round Pietà*, c. 1400, Paris, Musée du Louvre

A much earlier tondo, by an anonymous Parisian master of c. 1400, the so-called *Small Round Pietà* (Paris, Louvre), similarly functioned as a devotional talisman [fig. 210].¹³¹ Its diameter is only 12.7cm. The small panel is framed from the front with a rather thick, modelled, gilded frame. To see the painting in detail, one had to hold it by the frame with both hands, with fingers resting on the panel's verso. We turn the painting over and we become unpleasantly surprised. Our fingers touch the thorns of the crown depicted on the back of the panel, which encircles the depiction of the relics of the holy nails used to crucify Christ. Everything here is thorny. The painterly illusion causes the impression that the painting can pierce the fingers. Touch is the sense invoked by this painting, to no lesser degree than sight. Touch is the sense with which one perceives the relics. The relics transferred their power onto copies, replicas, and impressions that were made. They were disseminated and reproduced in such a way throughout Europe, hence the multitude of St. Longinus' lances, the heads of St. Maurice, or St. John the Baptist, as well as fragments of the crown of thorns *etc.* Thus, through the suggestion that it was created through touch, the Parisian tondo becomes an equivalent of the relic: its painterly version. It allows the bearer to imagine the suffering of Christ and at the same time it protects from eternal pain, ensuring the salvation.

Similar double-sided tondi are recorded by other ancient inventories.¹³² For instance, Jean de Berry had in his castle in Mehun-sur-Yèvre a *tableau* made from bones in the form of a tondo or two tondi that could be assembled into a whole, framed in silver or decorated with silver on its edges. One side showed the Pietà with angels holding the *arma passionis*, the lance and the cross; the other side depicted the Suffering Virgin with St. John and St. Catherine. We do not know whether the painting was as equally thorny as the *Small Pietà*; perhaps it was indeed the case, since the painting included the *arma Christi*. The Duke's collection also included another double-sided painting of a similar shape – a tondo with the Virgin nursing the Christ Child and St. John the Evangelist writing in a scroll. At the time, tondi were a popular format for paintings: from thirteen paintings in the inventory of Philip the Bold, the Burgundian Duke, three were of that shape, and another three round-shaped panels belonged

131 *Paris 1400. Les artes sous Charles VI*, cat. no. 116; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 234–235; P. Roelofs et al., *Johan Maelwael...*, cat. no. 22.

132 S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 234–235.

to the French king, Charles V. Presumably, not all of them were double-sided, but the surviving examples and descriptions from inventories testify to the fact that these panels were intended to be held, turned over and physically handled.



Fig. 211: Jan van Eyck, *Diptych of the Annunciation*, c. 1435-1440, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza

From the small-scale paintings the *Diptych of the Annunciation* in the Thyssen collection, a masterpiece by Jan van Eyck dated c. 1435-1440, must have had a special function [fig. 211].¹³³ as presumably a collectible item, admired by connoisseurs for the artistic quality of its making. The diptych is a display of the virtuoso abilities of the painter, whilst

133 *The Annunciation Diptych by Jan van Eyck in Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza*: C. Eisler, *Early Netherlandish Painting. The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection*, London 1991, no 3; R. Preimesberger, "Zu Jan van Eycks Diptychon der Sammlung Thyssen-Bornemisza," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 54, 1991, pp. 459-489 (in English: "On Jan van Eyck's Diptych in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection,"

also showing a level of erudition in ancient rhetoric and historiographic topoi. Thus, it stimulates the connoisseur to ponder the art of painting: its rules and potential for capturing the world of the sacred. The monochromatic figures that imitate sculptures highlight the corporeality of the depicted figures, whilst at the same time stressing the material aspect of the Incarnation of the Logos, which takes place during the Annunciation. Pliny and Cicero called the ability to capture physicality, both volume and material fabric, as *eminentia*, whilst Alberti referred to it as *prominentia* (*De re aedificatoria*, mid-fifteenth century); since Cennino Cennini (c. 1400) the Italian theory of art began to use the term *rilievo*. The illusion of this effect, achieved in a black and white image, recalls the paintings created with just two colours by Zeuxis, described by Pliny and Quintilian. The setting of the figures, against the polished background, imitating a black stone, could refer to the *atramentum* of another master of Antiquity, Apelles, who according to Pliny's *Natural History*, enabled such a high sheen and reflection of his paint (*repercussus*), that it was as if it was a mirror-stone – *lapis specularis*. This *atramentum* was perhaps a varnish, with which Apelles coated his paintings to give them lustre, but van Eyck might have understood it as the actual black background, which imitated a shiny, polished stone, which reflects the bright figures on its surface. Consequently, in the *Diptych of the Annunciation* the painter deliberately introduced the reflections of the figures in the black, stony background to reference that tradition. The tangible effect of the illusionistic, unpolychromed stone figures allows us to consider this work in the light of the *paragone* – the competition between

in: his, *Paragons and Paragone: Van Eyck, Raphael, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Bernini*, Los Angeles 2011, pp. 23–52); his, “Ein ‘Prüfstein der Malerei’ bei Jan van Eyck,” in: *Der Künstler über sich in seinem Werk*, (Internationales Symposium der Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rom 1989), ed. by M. Winner, Weinheim 1992, pp. 85–100; E. Bosshard, “Revealing Van Eyck: The Examination of the Thyssen-Bornemisza ‘Annunciation,’” *Apollo* July 1992, pp. 4–11; H. Belting, Ch. Kruse, *Die Erfindung des Gemäldes. Das erste Jahrhundert der niederländischen Malerei*, Munich 1994, no. 57 and passim; J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington – Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, in cooperation with Harvard University Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., and the Yale University Press, New Haven–London 2006, cat. no. 8; C.J. Purtle, “The Context of Jan van Eyck’s Approach to the Thyssen Annunciation Diptych,” in: *Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych: Essays in Context*, ed. by J.O. Hand, R. Spronk, Yale University Press, New Haven–London 2006, pp. 72–83; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck. Grisallas*, cat. no. 1; A. Ziembra, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 69–72 and p. 217; *Van Eyck* 2020, passim.

painting and sculpture to become the primal mode of capturing reality, inherited from Antiquity's concept of *mimesis* – art imitating nature. Van Eyck establishes himself as the master of painting, surpassing sculptors in achieving the illusion of reality. He imitates the *eminence* of masses with a restricted palette and captures faithfully the real colours of the stones: the white and yellow tones of the sandstone or limestone (statues), the purplish red of the porphyry (in the illusionistic carved frame), and the black of the marble in the background. He applies six different pigments and dyes (lead white, charcoal and soot, iron oxide, red ochre, cinnabar and Terra di Siena), to achieve four colours: white, black, red and yellow. Perhaps in this way van Eyck referred to Pliny's *topos*, the praise of Apelles, who created his painterly illusions with just four colours. Thus, van Eyck would become the new Apelles. The *paragone* and the rivalry between the legendary artists of Antiquity gains a new, Christian meaning. The restricted colour scheme and the lack of polychromy in the statues express antique thought that it is not the material but the skill of the artist through which the perfection of the artwork is attained (*materiam superabat opus*). At the same time, these artistic choices highlight that through self-restriction the artist echoes the spirit of the scene depicted: just as the Annunciation revealed the Virgin's virtue of humility, so the painter showed the figures of saints without the splendour of colours, plainly white against the black background, and despite these limitations he achieved the perfect *mimesis*.

In this diptych, Van Eyck establishes his illusion through manipulating the viewer and the object. The illusion encourages the owner to engage with the object manually. The object seems to be heavy, carved in stone, but when the beholder lifts it, s/he understands (if one did not notice it before) that it is in fact a wooden object. When the actual material is discerned, the viewer believes they are holding an enclosed triptych, particularly when looking at the "versos" of what appear to be the moveable wings: painted *en grisaille*, which is typical for this format. But this alleged triptych cannot be opened to reveal the inside of the altarpiece, presumably full of vivid colours. In fact, the viewer holds in their hands a diptych and can look only at the rectos, not versos of the panels. Consequently, there is nothing more left to see. When the curiosity leads him or her to turn over the object, he or she will notice two surfaces of fictive marble. One can only close the work as a book. What seems to be external is the actual inside, and vice versa – the work is a painted paradox. Alternatively, when the viewer sees the diptych in its closed form, he/she might believe that it is a heavy block of stone. And again, the aforementioned series of illusionistic sensations will come to play with the realisation that the block in fact can be open.

This illusionistic play, linked to the *en grisaille* painting, was well-suited for the taste of high courtly art, formulated through manuscript illuminations,

created in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for both royal and ducal clientele.¹³⁴ Taking objects into the hands, touching them, flipping through them as with a book – all this characterised interaction with these sophisticated objects. Today, as they hang on the walls of museums or are displayed in cases, they have lost their original function as things to be manipulated.

Small paintings by Albrecht Altdorfer from the early sixteenth century were undoubtedly intended as collectable items.¹³⁵ The panels and drawings measure c. 25 × 20cm or slightly less than that. They depict mythological scenes or saints in a landscape. Such images painted on panel include: *Satyr's Family* (1507, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie; 22 × 20.5cm) [fig. 212]; the diptych with two saints: *The Stigmatization of St. Francis and St. Jerome in the Wilderness* (1507, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie; 23.5 × 20.5 and 23.5 × 20.4cm) [fig. 213]; and one on parchment glued onto a panel: *St. George in a Forest* (1510, Munich, Alte Pinakothek; 28.2 × 22.5cm) [fig. 214]. The quality of finished, and not preparatory, landscapes characterises his *chiaroscuro* drawings on coloured papers: *The Wild Man Carrying a Tree* (1508, London, British Museum, 21.6 × 14.9cm) [fig. 215]; *The Family of Wild Men* (c. 1510, Vienna, Albertina, 19.3 × 14cm) [fig. 216]; *Pyramus's Death* (c. 1510, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, 21.3 × 15.6cm) [fig. 217]; *The Virgin and Child in a Forest* (c. 1510?, Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, 17 × 14.7cm) [fig. 218]; *Landscape with a Church*, (1522, now lost, formerly in the Koenig collection, Haarlem; 20.4 × 13.8cm) [fig. 219]; *Landscape with a Sunset*, c. 1522, Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek, 20.2 × 13.3cm) [fig. 220], and *Landscape with a Lumberjack*, (c. 1522, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, 20.1 × 13.6cm) [fig. 221]. All have a similar format and a painterly composition. All are informed by the same aura of German humanism from the end of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century.

134 For this interpretation of the painting and for the role of the *en grisaille* formula within the Burgundian and Netherlandish culture, as a fashionable solution, a vehicle of prestige of high courtly culture – see T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck. Grisallas*, exh. cat. Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid 2009 (with complete bibliography).

135 **Small landscape paintings by Albrecht Altdorfer:** Ch.S. Wood, *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape*, London 1993 (2nd revised edition: London 2013), pp. 80–89 and 138–153. N. Büttner, “‘Gut in kleinen Bildern’. Albrecht Altdorfer als Landschaftsmaler?,” in: *Albrecht Altdorfer. Kunst als zweite Natur*, eds. Ch. Wagner, O. Jehle, (Regensburger Studien zur Kunstgeschichte 17), Regensburg 2012, pp. 71–79; M. Stadlober, “Die Landschaftsdarstellung Albrecht Altdorfers. Idee und Form,” in: *Albrecht Altdorfer...*, pp. 81–89. For Altdorfer see also: M. Bushart, *Sehen und Erkennen. Albrecht Altdorfers religiöse Bilder*, Munich–Berlin 2004; Th. Noll, *Albrecht Altdorfer in seiner Zeit. Religiöse und profane Themen in der Kunst um 1500*, Munich 2004; M. Stadlober, *Der Wald in der Malerei und der Graphik des Donaustils*, Vienna 2006.



Fig. 212: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Satyr's Family*, 1507, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 213: Albrecht Altdorfer, *The Stigmatization of St. Francis and St. Jerome in the Wilderness*, 1507, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie,



Fig. 214: Albrecht Altdorfer, *St. George in a Forest*, 1510, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek



Fig. 215: Albrecht Altdorfer, *The Wild Man Carrying a Tree*, 1508, drawing, London, British Museum



Fig. 216: Albrecht Altdorfer, *The Family of Wild Men (The End of the Silver Age)*, c. 1510, drawing, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 217: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Pyramus's Death*, c. 1510, drawing, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 218: Albrecht Altdorfer, *The Virgin and Child in a Forest*, c. 1510?, drawing, Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Z 5 recto



Fig. 219: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Landscape with a Church*, 1522, drawing, lost, formerly in the Koenig collection, Haarlem



Fig. 220: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Landscape with a Sunset*, c. 1522, drawing, Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek



Fig. 221: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Landscape with a Lumberjack*, c. 1522, drawing, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett

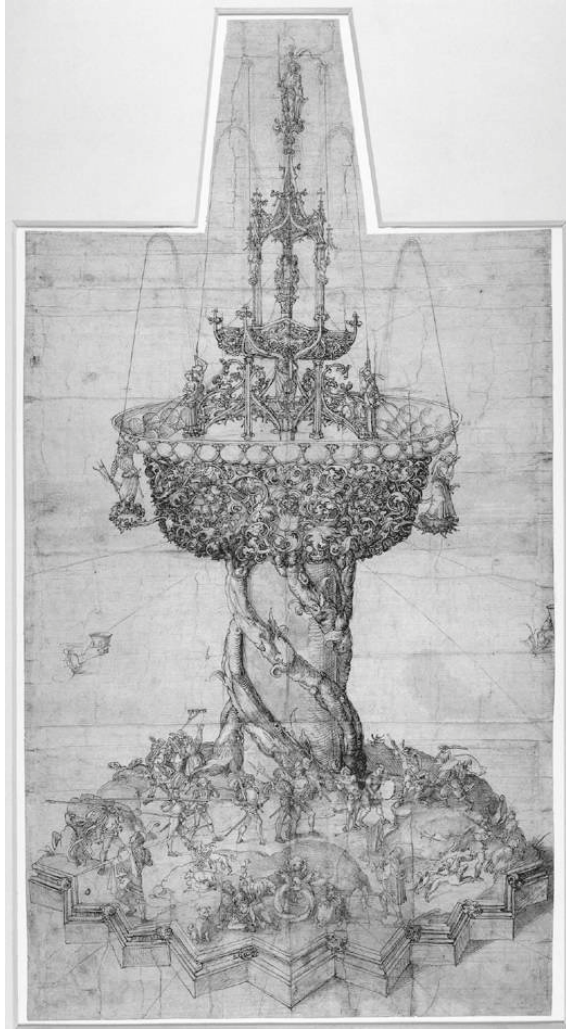


Fig. 222: Albrecht Dürer, *Design for a Table Fountain*, London, British Museum, SL,5218.83



Fig. 223: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Astwerk*, woodcut, Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

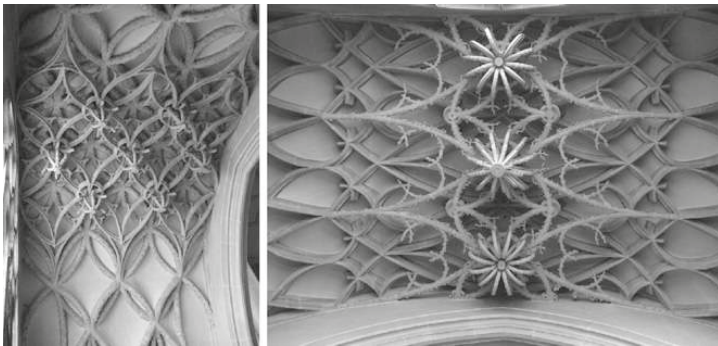


Fig. 224: Erhard and Ulrich Heidenreich, chapel vaultings in the Our Lady Church in Ingolstadt, 1509–1524

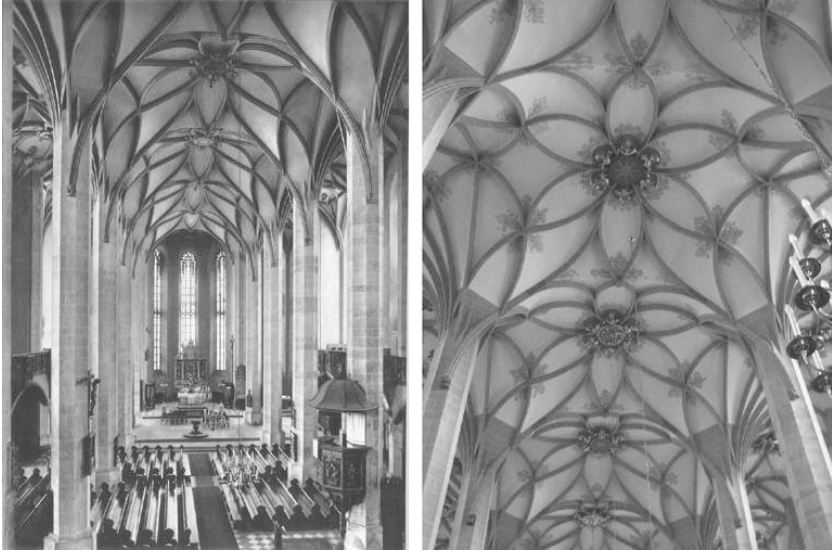


Fig. 225: Conrad Pflüger, Jacob Haylmann, Church of St. Anne, Annaberg, 1499–1525, with vaults by Jacob Haylmann, 1515–1525

The interest in forests, dense thickets, twisted or plain forms of trees, trunks, branches and vines characterises various aspects of artistic production, establishing a stylistic phenomenon at times referred to as the arboreal or floral style.¹³⁶ As an ornament in the form of gnarled branches – the *Astwerk* – is used widely in sculpture, architecture, printmaking and metalwork [fig. 222].¹³⁷ It is an interchangeable and alternative motif to the Italian Renaissance acanthus leaf, attentively and meticulously studied by Altdorfer in a large, display woodcut [fig. 223]. In the decoration of Saxe-Thuringian churches, Bohemian and Austrian, the branches envelop the portals, pillars become furcate tree trunks, and the ribs of the vaults

136 **Arboreal or floral style in architecture and art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:** E. Matt Kavalier, *Renaissance Gothic: Architecture and the Arts in Northern Europe, 1470–1540*, New Haven 2012. See also further notes.

137 **Astwerk:** J. Büchner, “Ast-, Laub- und Masswerkgewölbe der endenden Spätgotik. Zum Verhältnis von Architektur, dekorativer Malerei und Bauplastik,” in: *Festschrift Karl Oettinger zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by H. Sedlmayr, W. Messerer, Erlangen 1967, pp. 265–302; M. Braun-Reichenbacher, *Das Ast- und Laubwerk: Entwicklung, Merkmale und Bedeutung einer spätgotischen Ornamentform*, Nuremberg 1969; H. Günther, “Das Astwerk und die Theorie der Renaissance von der Entstehung der Architektur,” in: *Théorie des arts et création artistique dans l’Europe du Nord du XVIe au début du XVIIIe siècle*,

imitate branches and pergolas, like alleys in forests (Pirna, Most, Annaberg, Königswiesen, Weistrach and many more) [figs. 224–225].¹³⁸

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- 2002, pp. 13–32; É. Hamon, “Le naturalisme dans l’architecture française autour de 1500,” in: *Le Gothique de la Renaissance*, (colloquium: Paris 2007), Paris 2011, pp. 329–343; E.M. Kavalier, “On vegetal imagery in Renaissance Gothic,” in: *Le Gothique...*, pp. 297–312; A. Huczmanová, “Astwerk, jedna z forem mimesis: příspěvek k vegetabilnímu dekoru pozdní gotiky,” in: *Cultural Transfer. umělecká výměna mezi Itálií a střední Evropou*, (conference: Charles University in Prague 2014), ed. by M. Nová, M. Opatrná, Prague 2014, pp. 31–36.
- 138 **Arboreal and floral vaults and micro-architectural formations:** F. Bucher, “Micro-architecture as the ‘Idea’ of Gothic Theory and Style,” *Gesta* 15, 1976, pp. 71–89; N. Nussbaum, S. Lepsky, *Das gotische Gewölbe. Eine Geschichte seiner Form und Konstruktion*, Munich–Berlin 1999, pp. 216–273; J. Büchner, “Ast-, Laub- und Masswerkgewölbe der endenden Spätgotik, Zum Verhältnis von Architektur, dekorativer Malerei und Bauplastik,” in: *Festschrift Karl Oettinger zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by H. Sedlmayr, W. Messerer, Erlangen 1967, pp. 265–302; R. Mark, *Experiments in Gothic Structure*, Cambridge, MA, 1982; P. Kurmann, “Gigantomanie und Miniatur: Möglichkeiten gotischer Architektur zwischen Großbau und Kleinkunst,” *Kölner Domblatt* 1996, pp. 123–146; E. M. Kavalier, “Nature and the Chapel Vaults at Ingolstadt: Structuralist and Other Perspectives,” *The Art Bulletin* 87, 2005, pp. 230–248; his, “Renaissance Gothic: Pictures of Geometry and Narratives of Ornament,” *Art History* 29, 2006, pp. 1–46; S. Bürger, *Figurierte Gewölbe zwischen Saale und Neisse. Spätgotische Wölbkunst von 1400 bis 1600*, 3 vols., Weimar 2007; *Mikroarchitektur im Mittelalter. Ein gattungsübergreifendes Phänomen zwischen Realität und Imagination*, (conference Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, 2005), ed. by Ch. Kratzke, U. Albrecht, Leipzig 2008; E.M. Kavalier, *Renaissance Gothic...* (2012); A. Timmermann, “Microarchitecture in the Medieval West, 800–1550,” in: *The Cambridge History of Religious Architecture of the World*, ed. by R. Etlin, New York – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming (2020). **Saxe-Thuringian-Bohemian churches c. 1500 and their vaults:** H. Meuche, “Anmerkungen zur Gestalt der sächsischen Hallenkirchen um 1500,” in: *Aspekte zur Kunstgeschichte von Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Karl Heinz Clasen zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. by H. Müller, G. Hahn, Weimar 1971, pp. 167–189; J. Homolka et al., *Pozdně gotické umění v Čechách, 1471–1526*, Praha 1978; N. Nussbaum, *Deutsche Kirchenbaukunst der Gotik. Entwicklung und Bauformen*, Cologne 1985 (in English: *German Gothic Church Architecture*, New Haven–London 2000). See also: K.H. Clasen, *Deutsche Gewölbe der Spätgotik*, Berlin 1958; J. Büchner, *Ast-, Laub- und Masswerkgewölbe der endenden Spätgotik...*; N. Nussbaum, S. Lepsky, *Das gotische Gewölbe...*, E.M. Kavalier, *Renaissance Gothic...* (2012), passim. **Pirna, Marian church:** E.H. Lemper, *Stadtkirche St. Marien zu Pirna*, Berlin 1957; N. Nußbaum, *Deutsche Kirchenbaukunst der Gotik...*, pp. 216–217; A. Sturm, M. Kern, H. Magirius, *Pirna. Die Stadtkirche St. Marien*, Regensburg 2009; S. Bürger, “Unregelmässigkeit als Anreiz zur

The vines, leaves, bushes, flowers become micro-architecture, as in the Tulip Pulpit from Freiberg Collegiate Church (now the cathedral) dated c. 1508–1510, signed by Master HW [fig. 226].¹³⁹ The surfaces of stalls

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- Ordnung oder Impuls zum Chaos. Die virtuose Steinmetzkunst der Pirnaer Marienkirche,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 74, 2011, pp. 123–132. **Jacob Haylmann of Schweinfurt (Churches in Most and Annaberg):** K. Oberdorffer, “Jakob Haylmann aus Schweinfurt, ein fränkischer Baumeister der Dürerzeit,” in: *700 Jahre Stadt Schweinfurt, 1254–1954*, Würzburg 1954, pp. 113–126; K. Kratzsch, *Bergstädte des Erzgebirges. Städtebau und Kunst zur Zeit der Reformation*, (Münchner kunsthistorische Abhandlungen 4), Munich 1972; H. Burchardt, “Jacob Haylmann. Leben und Werk des bedeutenden fränkischen Baumeisters (1475–1525),” *Heimatfreund Erzgebirge* 18, 1973, pp. 37–41; J. Homolka et al., *Pozdně gotické umění v Čechách 1471–1526*, Praha 1978; N. Nussbaum, *Deutsche Kirchenbaukunst der Gotik...*; H. Burchardt, *Jacob Haylmann. Leben und Werk des fränkischen Baumeisters Jacob von Schweinfurt*, Baden-Baden 2004; S. Bürger, “Ebenmaß und Kontraste. Die hochspezialisierte Raumkunst Jakob Heilmanns von Schweinfurt (1517 bis 1525),” in: *Werkmeister der Spätgotik. Personen, Amt und Image*, ed. by S. Bürger, B. Klein, K. Schröck, Darmstadt 2010, pp. 216–231. **Most (German: Brüx), Parish church:** H. Mannlová- Raková, *Děkanský kostel v Mostě v dějinách česko-saské pozdní gotiky*, Most 1969; H. Mannlová, *Kostel Nanebevzetí Panny Marie v Mostě v dějinách Českosaské pozdní gotiky*, Most 1970; H. Mannlová- Raková, *Kulturní památka Most. Děkanský kostel a jeho stavitelé*, Prague 1988/1989. See above: Jacob Haylmann. **Annaberg, Church of St. Anne:** H. Magirius, *St. Annen zu Annenberg*, Berlin 1975, new editions: Berlin 1985, Munich–Zurich 1991; E.M. Kavalier, *Renaissance Gothic...* (2012), Introduction. See also above: Jacob Haylmann. **Königswiesen and Weistrach in Austria, parish churches:** N. Nussbaum, *Deutsche Kirchenbaukunst der Gotik...*; N.G. Brucher, *Gotische Baukunst in Österreich*, Salzburg–Vienna 1990; B. Ulm, *Die Pfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt zu Königswiesen*, Salzburg 1991, 2nd edition 2007; S. Hampel, *Herkunft und Entwicklung des Bogen- und Schlingrippengewölbes in Österreich. Schwerpunktmäßig dargestellt an den Kirchen in Weistrach, Freistadt und Königswiesen*, M.A. thesis, University of Vienna 1996; *Dehio-Handbuch: Die Kunstdenkmäler Österreichs, Niederösterreich südlich der Donau*, Horn–Vienna 2003; R. Weidl, *Pfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt in Königswiesen (Diözese Linz, Bezirk Freistadt, Oberösterreich)*, (Christliche Kunststätten Österreichs 467), Salzburg 2007.
- 139 **Master HW – Hans Witten and the Tulip pulpit in Freiberg:** L. Behling, “Die Freiburger Tulpenkanzel, eine Blume der Spätgotik. Ein Beitrag zum gegenständlichen Ornament der Spätgotik,” *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena* 3, 1953/1954 (Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe 4/5), pp. 471–477; E.-H. Lemper, “Spätgotische Plastik in Sachsen,” *Sächsische Heimatblätter* 8, 1962, no. 4, pp. 301–331; H. Magirius, *Der Dom zu Freiberg*, Berlin 1977; H. Magirius, D. Beeger, H. Prescher, “Die Tulpenkanzel im Dom zu

Freiberg,” *Abhandlungen des Staatlichen Museums für Mineralogie und Geologie zu Dresden* 27, 1977, pp. 41–62; M. Pfannstiel, *Die Tulpenkanzel. Bilder aus der Geschichte Freibergs und des Erzbergbaus*, 1980; H. Magirius, K.G. Beyer, *Der Dom zu Freiberg*, Munich 1986; A. Kiesewetter, H. Siedel, M. Stuhr, M. Breitbach, et al., *Die Tulpenkanzel im Dom zu Freiberg*, Dresden 1995; A. Kiesewetter, H. Siedel, “Die Restaurierung der Tulpenkanzel im Dom zu Freiberg,” in: *Denkmalpflege in Sachsen 1894–1994*, ed. by H. Magirius, A. Dülberg, Weimar 1997, pp. 333–342; G. Lamsechi, “Freiberg’s Tulip Pulpit: Hybrid Nature and Civic Politics,” in: *The Book of Nature and Humanity in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by D. Hawkes, R.G. Newhauser, (Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, 29), Turnhout 2013, pp. 157–179; S. Bürger, “Bedingte Kunst: Aspekte einer Raumkonzeption jenseits von Typus und Stil am Beispiel der Fürstengrablege im Freiburger Dom (bis 1595),” in: “Um 1600” – *Das Neue Lusthaus in Stuttgart und sein architekturgeschichtlicher Kontext*, ed. by S. Paulus, K.J. Philipp, Berlin–Münster 2017, pp. 59–73. Cf. on Hans Witten/Master HW: W. Hentschel, *Hans Witten: Der Meister H.W.*, Leipzig 1938; T. Tappen, H.-G. Uhl, “Hans Witten von Köln?,” in: *Festschrift Karl Frölich*, Goslar 1952, pp. 104–116; W. Grundmann, *Der Meister H.W. Das Schaffen Hans Wittens*, Berlin 1976; M. Stuhr, *Die Bildwerke des Meisters H.W.*, Leipzig 1985; G. Hummel, B. Löwe, F. Reinhold, *Der Meister H.W. Ein kunstgeschichtlicher Streifzug zu Leben und Werk des Bildhauers Hans Witten*, (Begleitheft zur Ausstellung “Spätgotische Schnitzaltäre und Plastiken im ostthüringisch-vestsächsischen Raum,” Altenburg 2002), Altenburg–Weißbach 2003; *Die “Schöne Tür” in der Sankt Annenkirche zu Annaberg*, ed. by H. Magirius, Dresden 2003; Ch. König, “Das Vesperbild des Meisters HW in der St. Jakobikirche zu Goslar,” in: *Malerei und Skulptur des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit in Norddeutschland...*, pp. 343–353; S. Schellenberger, *Bildwerke des Meisters H.W. Entwicklungen der spätgotischen Skulptur zwischen Raumkonstruktion und Graphik*, dissertation Humboldt University, Berlin 2005 (<http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/dissertationen/schellenberger-simona-2005-05-02/PDF/schellenberger.pdf>); M. Tontsch, “‘Marienklage’: Gedanken zur Pietà in der St.-Jakobus-Kirche,” in: *St.-Jakobi-Kirche Goslar: 1073–1805–2005. Festschrift zur Wiederbegründung der Katholischen Kirchengemeinde St. Jakobus der Ältere vor 200 Jahren*, Hildesheim 2005, pp. 47–58; M. Stuhr, “Die Steinkanzel in St. Aegidien zu Braunschweig – ein braunschweigisches Frühwerk des Meisters HW um 1500?,” in: *St.-Jakobi-Kirche Goslar: 1073–1805–2005. Festschrift zur Wiederbegründung der Katholischen Kirchengemeinde St. Jakobus der Ältere vor 200 Jahren...*, pp. 333–341; G. Hummel, *Der Hochaltar der St. Niklaskirche Ehrenfriedersdorf*, Altenburg–Weißbach 2007; M. Hörsch, “St. Ulrich in Chemnitz: Gedanken zu zwei Flügeln, wohl vom Hochaltar der ehemaligen Franziskanerkirche in Chemnitz, und zur Rekonstruktion des Hochaltarretabels der Chemnitzer Jakobikirche von Hans von Köln,” in: *Beständig im Wandel. Innovationen – Verwandlungen – Konkretisierungen. Festschrift für Karl Möseneder zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by Ch. Hecht, Berlin 2009, pp. 101–110; Ch. Kelm, “Zum ikonographischen Programm des Ehrenfriedersdorfer Altars,” in: *Forschungen zur spätgotischen Retabelkunst*, ed. by Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Sachsen, Dresden 2016, pp. 98–105; her,

are covered with foliage. Bunches and pergolas fill the carved retables – for instance the altarpiece in Breisach and Niederrotweil by Master HL, and a similar example in Mauer near Melk from the circle of the master [fig. 227].¹⁴⁰ The motifs of wild greenery, or dry branches with leaves, flourish across numerous pages within prints by Master E.S., Martin Schongauer, Israhel van Meckenem and Dürer [fig. 228]. They grow into the painted panels or epitaphs, as the Tree of Jesse, or the Tree of Life, or as frames.



Fig. 226: Master HW, the Tulip Pulpit in the Minster of Freiberg, c. 1508-1510

“Fasstechniken bei Meister HW,” in: *Forschungen zur spätgotischen Retabelkunst...*, pp. 145–155; A. Kiesewetter, “Künstlerische Intention oder Nichtvollendung? Der Schnitzaltar in der Marienkirche Rötha und seine Holzichtigkeit im Vergleich zu anderen holzsichtigen Retabeln der Spätgotik,” in: *Forschungen zur spätgotischen Retabelkunst...*, pp. 6–35.

- 140 Master HL, altarpieces in Breisach and Niederrotweil: T. Demmler, “Der Meister des Breisacher Hochaltar,” *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 35, 1914, pp. 103–135; I. Krummer-Schroth, “Der Schnitzaltar in Niederrotweil a.K.,” *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Baden-Württemberg* 8, 1971, pp. 65–96; J. Rasmussen, “Zum Meister H.L.,” *Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunstsammlungen* 18, 1973, pp. 55–68; H. Schindler, *Der Schnitzaltar. Meisterwerke und Meister in Süddeutschland, Österreich und Südtirol*, Regensburg 1978, pp. 174–181; M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, pp. 23, 30–32, 299–300; H. Brommer, “War Hans Loy der Meister HL?,” *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 100, 1980, pp. 161–202; H. Gombert, “Untersuchungen zum Werk des Meister H.L.,” *Das Münster* 34, 1981, pp. 17–31; H. Schindler, *Der Meister HL = Hans Loy? – Werk und Wiederentdeckung*, Königstein i.T. 1981; M.J. Liebmann, *Die deutsche Plastik*



Fig. 227: Master HL, *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin* (Altarpiece in Breisach), c. 1523–1526, Breisach, Minster (Stephansmünster), overall view and central section

1350–1550, pp. 387–389; V. Wagner, *Der Meister H. L. an Oberrhein und Donau*, Munich 1993; Ch. Talbot, “Master HL,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, ed. by J. Turner, New York–Oxford 1996 ff. (www.oxfordartonline.com), s.v.; H. Metz, *Der Breisacher Altar: Der Altar des Meisters HL im Breisacher St. Stephansmünster*, Königstein i.T. 2000; G. Klein, *Das Breisacher Sankt Stephansmünster*, Breisach 2002; A.R. Wildi-Lang, *Das Geheimnis um Meister H.L.*, Baden-Baden 2006; J. Chipps Smith, “Master H.L. and the Challenge of Invention in Different Media,” in: *Invention: Northern Renaissance Studies in Honour of Molly Faries*, ed. by J. Chapuis, Turnhout 2008, pp. 175–189; R. Kahsnitz, “Der Niederrotweiler Altar,” in: *Nicht die Bibliothek, sondern das Auge...*, pp. 293–309. **Altarpiece in pilgrim church of St. Marien in Mauer by Melk:** H. Schindler, *Der Schnitzaltar...*, pp. 199–214; A. Saliger et al., *Der Schnitzaltar von Mauer bei Melk*, exh. cat., Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna 1997; M.M. Schuller, *Der Altar von Mauer bei Melk – ursprüngliches Aussehen und ursprüngliche Ikonographie*, M.A. thesis, University of Vienna 2003; R. Kahsnitz, “Veit Stoss und der Altar in Mauer,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 61 2007, no. 2/3, pp. 263–272; F. Kobler, “Zur Passauer Skulptur um 1520–1530 / Pasovská plastika z let kolem 1520–1530,” in: *Světelský oltář v kontextu pozdně gotického umění střední Evropy*, (symposium: Mukulov Castle 2007), ed. by B. Fabiánová, Z. Vácha, Brno 2008, pp. 189–204; R. Kahsnitz, “Die Altäre von Mauer und Zwettl: zwei donauländische Bildschnitzer der Spätgotik / Oltáře z Maueru a Světlé: dva dunajští řezbáři pozdní gotiky,” in: *Světelský oltář v kontextu pozdně gotického umění střední Evropy*, pp. 67–82; L. Schultes, “Der Zwettler Altar und sein(e) Meister – eine Bilanz / Světelský oltář a jeho mistr(ři) – bilance,” in: *Světelský oltář v kontextu pozdně gotického umění střední Evropy...*, pp. 83–102; M. Koller, “Die Retabel von Kefermarkt, Mauer und Zwettl. Holzfarbigkeit und Teilfassungen / Retáblý z Kefermarktu, Maueru a Světlé: barevnost dřeva a parciální polychronie,” in: *Světelský oltář v kontextu pozdně gotického umění střední Evropy...*, pp. 213–224; G.M. Lechner, *Der Schnitzaltar des Meisters von Mauer bei Melk*, Regensburg 2010; A. Kocsis,



Fig. 228: Israhel van Meckenem, *Lovers Making Music in a Love Garden*, c. 1475, engraving, London, The Victoria & Albert Museum, no. 14000

What stimulated this common passion for the wild forest, trees and foliage? Scholars have offered many different answers to that question.¹⁴¹ Karl Oettinger interpreted the ‘tree’ forms or vegetation of the vaults in churches in Southern Germany as the suggestion of the forest vault – *Laube* – which

“Parallelfaltenstil und partielle Polychromie. Zur innovativen Formensprache des Meisters HL,” in: *Das Expressive in der Kunst 1500–1550*, ed. by J. Fajt, S. Jaeger, Berlin–Munich 2018, pp. 89–97.

- 141 **Interpretations of the arboreal and floral style:** 1/ *Laube* form as a simulation of the Tree of Paradise, Tree of Life and earthly Eden and pantheist symbol of Heavens–K. Oettinger, “Laube, Garten und Wald. Zu einer Theorie der süddeutschen Sakralkunst 1470–1520,” in: *Festschrift für Hans Sedlmayr*, Munich 1962, pp. 201–228; J. Büchner, *Ast-, Laub- und Masswerkgewölbe der endenden Spätgotik...*; G. Fehr, “Architektur,” in: *Die Kunst der Donaueschule 1490–1540*, exh. cat., Stift Sankt Florian – Schloßmuseum Linz 1965, pp. 202–212; M. Braun-Reichenbacher, *Das Ast- und Laubwerk...*, in particular p. 87; similar: church as the enclosed garden of the Paradise (*hortus conclusus*) – M. Kutzner, *Theologische Symbolik deutscher spätgotischer Hallenkirchen*, in: *Mittelalterliche Backsteingotik* (symposium Greiswald 1978) = *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald. Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaften* 29, 1980, no. 2/3, pp. 37–43; 2/ an alternative to the Italian Renaissance style, as a northern style of national significance– F. Bucher, “Fifteenth-century German Architecture: Architects in Transition,” in: *Artistes*,

acted as the Tree of Paradise, the Tree of Life and earthly Eden and a pantheistic symbol of the Heavens, and/or as a symbol of Heavenly Paradise. Marian Kutzner suggested that the form was adopted from panel painting and prints, which showed *hortus conclusus* – ‘the enclosed garden’ as the symbol of the virginity of Mary. François Bucher viewed the German floral (arboreal) style as an alternative to the Italian Renaissance, as a native northern (northern-French, German and central-European) and national style. Paul Crosley understood these architectural forms as a ‘national,’ ‘Germanic’ German style. The idiom was established as an opposition to the classicizing style of Alberti. It was nourished by Vitruvius’s treatise, which described the mythical origins of architecture as based on the imitation of foliage and trees, adopted into construction of Gothic architecture by Goths. Crosley cited the treatise by Matthäus Roriczer on pinnacles from 1486, addressed to Wilhelm von Reichenau, the bishop of Eichstätt and the chancellor of the University of Ingolstadt, who in around 1471 commissioned vaults with astwerk decoration in chapels of the Cathedral in Eichstätt, and later in the Marian church in Ingolstadt. These forms were seen as an alternative to the Italian Renaissance classicizing style promoted by Alberti and Vitruvius in their treatises, published around the same time, in 1485 and 1486. The floral-arboreal style echoed the historical and literary enquiries of German humanists into the ethnogenesis of the German nation, which was linked to the tradition of the Germanic tribes, the Franks and Chatti, as described by Tacitus (*Germania*). The arboreal vault became a symbol of the primordial forest from ancient Germanic times (*Urwald*). Therefore, the style was a native, German alternative to

artisans et production artistique au Moyen-Âge, pp. 409–416; 3/ “national,” Germanic style, as a German alternative of the Vitruvian architecture opposite to the classical style of Alberti, reflection of the historic and literary research of German humanists on ethnogenesis of the German nation – P. Crossley, “The Return to the Forest: Natural Architecture and the German Past in the Age of Dürer,” in: *Künstlerischer Austausch / Artistic Exchange*, (congress Berlin, 1992), ed. Th.W. Gaehtgens, Berlin 1993, vol. 2, pp. 71–80; see also H. Günter, “Die deutsche Spätgotik und die Wende vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit,” *Kunsthistorische Arbeitsblätter* 7/8, 2000, pp. 49–68; his, “Das Astwerk und die Theorie der Renaissance von der Entstehung der Architektur,” in: *Théorie des arts et création artistique dans Europe du Nord du XVI^e au début du XVIII^e siècle*, (colloquium: University of Lille 2000), Lille 2002, pp. 13–32; 4/ the native style in contrast to the *Welsch* style, a juxtaposition of Nature and Geometry, Nature and Architecture – E.M. Kavalier, *Nature and the Chapel Vaults at Ingolstadt...*; his, *Renaissance Gothic: Pictures of Geometry...*; his, *Renaissance Gothic: Architecture and the Arts...*; see also: S. Bürger, *Unregelmässigkeit als Anreiz zur Ordnung oder Impuls zum Chaos...*

Vitruvian architectural forms. On the other hand, Ethan Matt Kavaler, following that train of thought, suggested that it was a local style, treated as an opposition to the *Welsch* (Italianate Renaissance). The foliage and trees that inspired the vaults and forms of German architecture showed the contrast between Nature and Geometry, and Nature and Architecture. They revealed the ‘perverse corruption’ of the divine cosmos, which was originally based on mathematical and geometric order. The reversal of this natural order is represented by nature growing out of architecture: out of the initial Divine mathematical and geometric rules. In the process, it becomes deformed, with creation (Nature) turned into the arena of conflict between order and the deformation, between God and Satan, divine *ordo* and the material world’s inclination towards chaos (as described by northern philosophers and theologians, such as Nicholas of Cusa and others). The vaults of these churches demonstrate the world as the fight between geometry and vegetation, whilst becoming an apotropaic image of ‘forbidden nature’ as a complex, interwoven deviation from the mathematical ideals of God.

Christopher S. Wood applies this humanist symbolism of the Germanic forest to his interpretation of works by Altdorfer.¹⁴² He recalls a mythical vision of the dark forest, a wild and virgin wood, the heart of the nation and the primitive land, inhabited by Germanic tribes untameable by the Romans: the Wild Men and various monstrosities. The vision originates from the image of the *silva hercyniana* – the Hercynian forest, located far away, in the distant northern lands. It is recalled by Strabo in his *Geographica*, and Julius Caesar in the *Gallic War*. Tacitus in *Germania* describes dark woods and their insubordinate inhabitants as a location of the prehistoric tribal life – full of the virtues of bravery, gravity, and the austere customs cultivated by the proto-Republican system. A harsh and tough Germanic nation inhabits this wild nature and in so doing cultivates their valour (according to the first-century A.D. Roman geographer, Pomponius Mela). The German humanists adopt this theme to create their ethnogenetic apology. Conrad Celtis praised the bravery and courage of the wild tribes – progenitors of his own nation. The forest becomes their temple. In it, their heroic virtues flourish, ancient barbarians become the founders of the northern civilisation and its mythical heroes. The medieval Wild Men (*Wilde Leute* – a frequent iconographic motif) become good-natured and morally noble. The prehistoric Germanic people live in their forest amidst ancient satyrs and fauns, and their priests develop their religion. The forest becomes almost the house of the Germanic muses.

142 Ch.S. Wood, *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape*, pp. 128–138, 157–160.

Studies on the ancient Germanic tribes' customs and language (frequently seen as stemming from the ancient biblical language of Adam in Paradise, before the fall of the Tower of Babel) were initiated based on Tacitus by an Italian – Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini in his treatise *Germania* (1496). These are continued by the German scholars: Celtis in his edition of Tacitus's *Germania* (1497) and texts for the large planned compendium *Germania illustrate* (Norimberga, 1495, ed. 1502; *Amores; Germania generalis*, 1502), and by Johannes Aventinus and Beatus Rhenanus, who took over from Celtis (but the work was never completed). Additional works were completed by Jacob Wimpfeling (*Germania*, 1501); Conrad Peutinger in *Sermones convivales de mirandis Germaniae antiquitatibus* (1506); Franciscus Irenicus of Heidelberg (*Exegesis Germaniae*, 1518); Wilibald Pirckheimer (treatise on the original names of German cities, *Germaniae explicatio*, 1530), and finally by the aforementioned Beatus Rhenanus, who published the fundamental *Germanicarum libri tres* in 1531.

Functioning as he did in this aura of humanistic, historiographic myths, Altdorfer's drawings and paintings must have been addressed to erudite beholders: collectors and connoisseurs with claims to scientific, historic knowledge, who were conscious that these works shape the vision of the native landscape and history, in an alternative manner to the Italianate *Welsch* style, so that they established a different, local antiquity. That is why scholars, such as Bernard Aikema¹⁴³ readily contrast the *Satyr's Family* with Venetian *poesie* by Giorgione, primarily with his enigmatic *Tempest* (Venice, Galleria dell'Accademia), also a painting for collectors though of a significantly larger format (82 x 73cm). The small panels by Altdorfer encouraged viewers to look at them from up-close, in a focused way, diligently studying all the details. The fascinating, tightly woven mesh of trees and foliage forces the viewer to spot details or small motifs – such as the figures of St. George fighting the dragon, seemingly lost in the dense forest – or to contemplate the meaning of the figurative scenes: the satyrs, Pyramuses or Wild Men, travellers and lumberjacks. It motivates

143 *Renaissance Venice and the North ...*; B. Aikema, "Incroci transalpini: Burgkmair, Lotto, Altdorfer e Giorgione," in: *Opere e giorni. Studi su mille anni di arte europea dedicati a Max Seidel / Werke und Tage. Ttausend Jahre europäischer Kunstgeschichte. Studien zu Ehren von Max Seidel*, eds. K. Bergdolt, G. Bonsanti, Venice 2001, pp. 427–436; his, "Giorgione: Relationships with the North and a new interpretation of La Vecchia and La Tempesta," in: *Giorgione: Myth and Enigma*, eds. S. Ferino-Pagden, G. Nepi Scirè, exh. cat., Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna 2004, pp. 85–103.

the beholder to bring the sheet or the panel close to the eyes, to examine it from close to, and then later at a distance. The collector, connoisseur, or antiquarian – the owner of these images – looked at them in a similar way to reading a historiographic book about the Germanic antique, admiring its imaginative illustrations.

III.1.5. Painted panels as jigsaws, playing cards, and cards to assemble

What do playing cards, clearly intended for pleasure, have in common with religious paintings, designed to assist prayers? Delight and entertainment, instructions about the faith and devotion – are not these different purposes mutually exclusive? We shall see that those seemingly conflicting roles can in fact be reconciled.

During the fifteenth century card games become increasingly popular. It is a time when splendidly decorated, illuminated cards, designed together with the prints, were produced (these inspired the development of engraving.) A deck of cards was marked differently back then. Instead of four suits – hearts, diamonds, spades, clubs – there were animals, plants and types of objects: predators, deer, birds, flowers, musical instruments, weapons, *etc.* They often displayed a high level of realism and mimetic virtuosity.¹⁴⁴

144 **Playing cards:** *Spielkarten, ihre Kunst und Geschichte in Mitteleuropa*, ed. F. Koreny, exh. cat., Albertina, Vienna 1974; A.H. van Buren, Sh. Edmunds, “Playing Cards and Manuscripts: Some Widely Dissentated Fifteenth-century Model Sheets,” *The Art Bulletin* 56, 1974, pp. 12–30; *Altdeutsche Spielkarten 1500–1650. Katalog der Holzschnittkarten mit deutschen Farben aus dem Deutschen Spielkarten-Museum Leinfelden-Echterdingen und dem Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nürnberg*, ed. D. Hoffmann, exh. cat., Deutsches Spielkarten-Museum Leinfelden-Echterdingen – Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 1993; D. Hoffmann, M. Dietrich, *Kultur- und Kunstgeschichte der Spielkarte*, Deutsches Spielkarten-Museum, Leinfelden-Echterdingen, Marburg 1995; Ch. von Heusinger, “Ein unerkanntes Kartenspiel des Meister E. S.,” in: *Le beau Martin. Études et mises au point*, (kolokwium: Musée d’Unterlinden, Colmar 1991), ed. A. Châtelet, Colmar 1994, pp. 215–221; R. Reinhold, “Die Spielkarten des Israhel van Meckenem (1450–1503),” *Der Alte: Jahresschrift des Schloß- und Spielkartenmuseum Altenburg* 10, 2006, pp. 9–11; U. Wörner, *Die Dame im Spiel. Spielkarten als Indikatoren des Wandels von Geschlechterbildern und Geschlechterverhältnissen an der Schwelle zur Frühen Neuzeit*, Münster–Munich et al. 2010; T. Husband, *The World in Play: luxury cards 1430–1540*, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2015.



Fig. 229: Workshop or circle of Lucas Moser, playing cards from a set called *Stuttgarter Kartenspiel*, c. 1420–1430, Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum

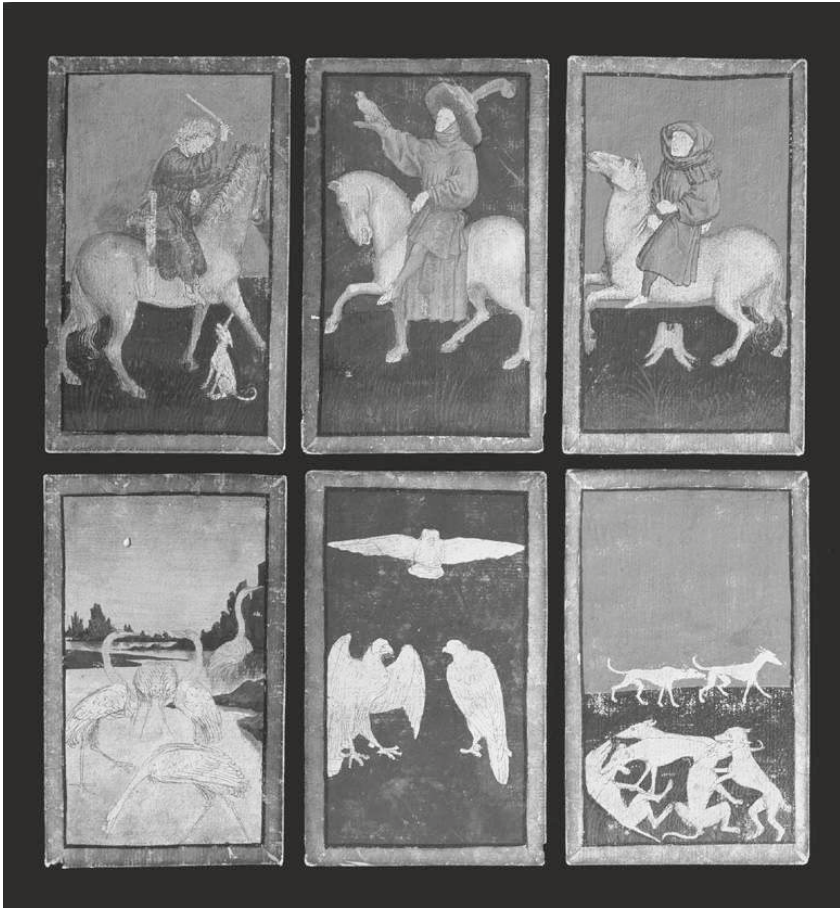


Fig. 230: German painter (Upper Rhine), Playing cards from Ambras (*Ambraser Hofjagdspiel*), 1440–1445, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

Painted cards – perhaps by Lucas Moser himself, or in any case by a master from his circle – from a set created around 1420–1430, surviving in a fragmentary state in Stuttgart (*Stuttgarter Kartenspiel*, Württembergisches Landesmuseum), show dames and knights, pages and servants, falcons, hunting dogs and wild geese and deer as suits of the game [fig. 229]. They are relics of sophisticated courtly culture, where card games and hunting were the two important, elite forms of entertainment. Their dimensions are 19 x 12cm. According to scientific analysis, they are formed of six layers of paper that was glued together (this was manufactured at the paper mill in Ravensburg between 1427 and 1431). Costly pigments and dyes were used: azurite, vermillion, red

lakes, lead-tin yellow, and gold mixed with silver in the background. They were expensive artefacts, and artistically very skilfully made. Card play with this deck was not merely an automated entertainment, but it provided an aesthetic and sensory delight. Playing, shuffling, and laying cards on the table revealed new hunting and courtly scenes. During the play one almost recreated the actual hunting scene. The game – as a delight and a ceremony – became orchestrated as a courtly entertainment with its various stages. The juxtaposition of various cards and scenes was crucial, as was shuffling them, combining them in sequences, and the comparing of one to another. The same function was played by the beautiful illustrations on the fifty-four cards from the so-called *Ambraser Hofjagdspiel*, from Ambras castle near Innsbruck (now in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) [figs. 26, 230]. These were created between 1440–1445, surely in the Upper Rhine, but seemingly erroneously attributed to Konrad Witz.¹⁴⁵

There were also more basic playing cards, cut from woodcuts, which at times included many cards on a single leaf, as in *Liechtensteinisches Kartenspiel*, a deck from the Upper Rhine dated c. 1440 [fig. 231]. These were bought by the less sophisticated clientele.

In turn, the popular engraved playing cards again had a sophisticated form, though they were probably less expensive than the painted examples. For instance, a set of nine cards printed on the same sheet (ready to be cut out), was created in the second quarter of the fifteenth century by the Master of the Banderols, the Netherlandish-Lower Rhine printmaker, active presumably in the Overijssel region (London, British Museum) [fig. 232].¹⁴⁶ In their design artists used earlier pattern books, as in the work of the Master of the Playing Cards from the Upper Rhine [fig. 233]. Elegantly designed figures of pages, dames, dogs and birds were introduced to the decks by the Master E.S. active c. 1450–1467 in the region of Lake Constance [fig. 234].¹⁴⁷

145 *Stuttgarter Kartenspiel*: H. Maurer, *Das Stuttgarter Kartenspiel / The Stuttgart Palying Cards*, Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart 1991; U. Wörner, “Das Stuttgarter Spiel (um 1429) – ein Abbild der ‘Jagd nach Liebe’. Ikonologische Betrachtungen zu einem Kartenspiel aus dem Hause Wittelsbach,” *Bayerisches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, 2011, pp. 27–39; T. Husband, *The World in Play... Ambraser Hofjagdspiel*: H. Röttgen, “Das Ambraser Hofjagdspiel,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 57, 1961, pp. 39–68 (attributed to Konrad Witz), separate: *Das Ambraser Hofjagdspiel*, Leipzig 1969; J. Lucas, *Europa in Basel. Das Konzil von Basel (1431–1449) als Laboratorium der Kunst*, Basel 2017, chapter 5.3: *Das Ambraser Hofjagdspiel*, pp. 236 ff.

146 L. IV.152.101.

147 Master E.S. – monographs: A. Shestack, *Master E. S.*, exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia 1967; H. Bevers, *Meister E. S. Ein oberrheinischer Kupferstecher der Spätgotik*, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung,



Fig. 231: Upper Rhine master, sheet with playing cards, so-called *Liechtensteinisches Kartenspiel*, woodcut, c. 1440–1450?, Paris, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Estampes, Coll. Rothschild 3806 LR

München – Kupferstichkabinett Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Munich 1986; *Meister E. S. Alle 320 Kupferstiche*, ed. H. Appuhn, Dortmund 1989; M. Nass, *Meister E. S. Studien zu Werk und Wirkung*, Frankfurt a.M. 1994; J. Höfler, *Der Meister E. S. Ein Kapitel europäischer Kunst des 15. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2, Regensburg 2007. Playing cards: Ch. von Heusinger, “Ein unerkanntes Kartenspiel des Meister E. S.,” in: *Le beau Martin...*, pp. 215–221; S. Krause, “Das Große Kartenspiel des Meisters E.S. Frühe gedruckte Fecht-darstellungen,” *Waffen- und Kostümkunde*, 2013, no. 1, pp. 1–18.

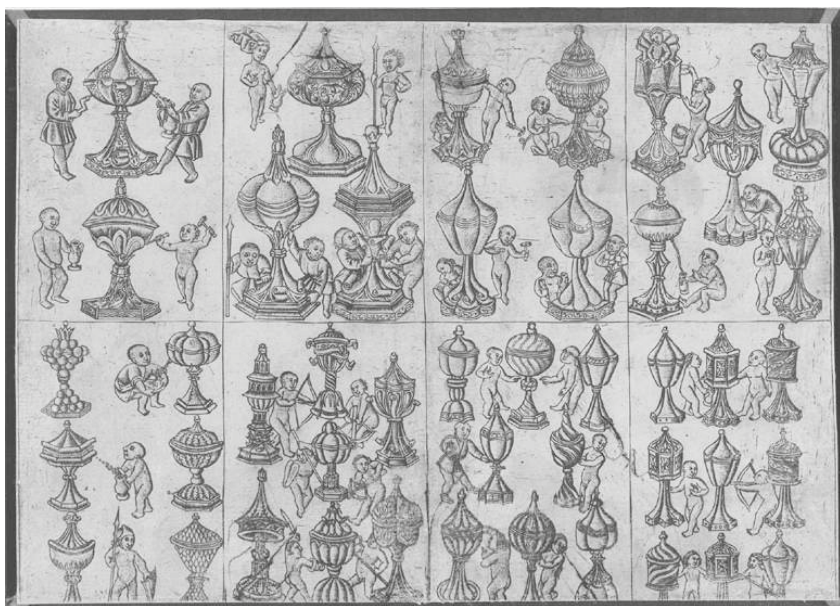


Fig. 232: Master of the Banderols, set of eight cards printed on the same sheet, London, British Museum, 1896,0501.1163



Fig. 233: Master of the Playing Cards, *The Queen of Flowers*, engraving, ca. 1430–1440, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Janet Lee Kadesky Ruttenberg Fund, in honor of Colta Ives, and Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 2006 (2006.429) and *The Three of Birds*, engraving, ca. 1430–1440, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département Estampes et photographie, reserve boîte fol-kh-25 (1-2)

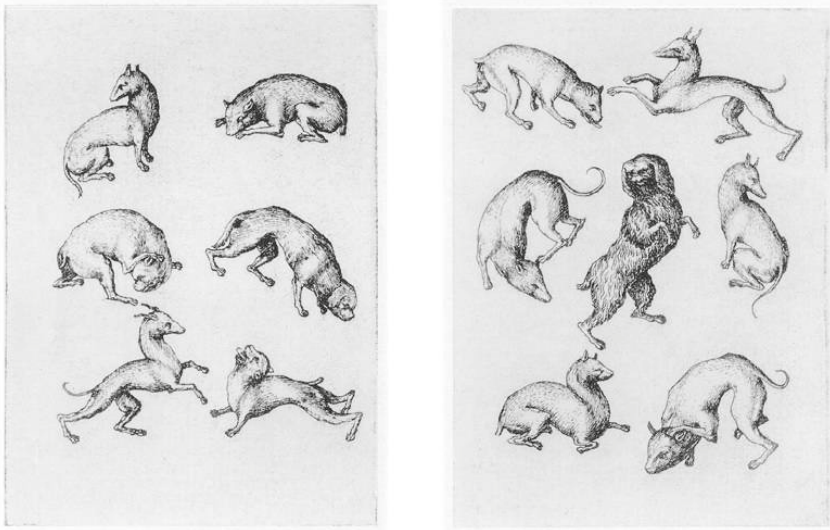


Fig. 234: Master E.S., playing cards *The Six* and *The Seven of Dogs*, engravings, c. 1460–1465, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale

To the oeuvre of the Master E.S., dated c. 1466–1467, belongs a fascinating set of entertaining sheets of engravings, this time not playing cards, but cards to be assembled: figurative letters from the alphabet, drawn as fine examples of calligraphy and composed of animal and human figures [fig. 235].¹⁴⁸ They are relatively small in size, similar to the playing cards, with dimensions between 14 x 10cm to c. 16.5 x 19.5cm. They have various formats, but are typically vertical, less commonly horizontal. They served as patterns for the decoration of furniture, wall intarsias, weapons, horse bids and leather goods, ceramics and draperies, but in all likelihood, they were collected primarily as prints, used for entertainment and to compose words. They were word riddles. For instance, ‘M’ shows a merchant, a courtesan and a fool, and can be interpreted as *mercator*, *meretrix*, *matus*, symbols of greed, lust and foolishness. ‘V’ depicts St. Christopher carrying the Christ Child on his shoulders, lifting his hand in benediction, and a hermit illuminating the road with a lamp – thus the image refers to Christ’s words from the Gospel of St. John: *via, veritatis, vitae* ([I am] the way, the truth, and the life). These cards were assembled

148 *Alphabet* by Master E.S.: J.A. Wurst, *Das Figurenalphabet des Meister E.S.*, pp. 114–115 (with a summary of previous interpretations of the cycle’s meaning and function).

into words and texts, and entertained with their various implications and moral messages. The German master adopted the rule of the fourteenth-century Italian alphabets, which are known to us, for instance, through the drawings of Giovannino de'Grassi (Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica Angelo Mai, Cassaf.1.21).



Fig. 235: Master E.S., Letters M and V(U) from the *Alphabet* series, 1466–1467, engraving, Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung

Every printed series had a similar operational dimension – to be laid on the table and assembled from individual sheets into a narrative whole. Dürer’s series of woodcuts of the *Apocalypse* (1498, 15 prints) must have functioned in this way, whilst other series – the *Large Passion* (1496–1498 and 1510, 11 woodcuts) and the *Life of the Virgin* (1510–1511, 20 woodcuts) and the engraved *Small Passion* (1509–1510, 37 prints) – were published as books.

The rule of assembling small images into specific sequences is the principle governing the series, not only in printmaking.

In 1492 Michel Sittow appeared at the court of Isabella of Castile (the Catholic) in Spain. He was a painter from the Reval (Tallin) by the Baltic Sea, educated in Bruges, probably in the circle of Memling and the Master of the Dresden Prayer book, or in Ghent, in the circle of Hugo van der Goes and the Master of Mary of Burgundy, or perhaps even in France, in the circle of the Netherlandish artist, the so-called Master of Moulin, typically identified with Jean Hey.¹⁴⁹ Soon after, in 1496, another Netherlandish master was active at the Spanish court – Juan de Flandes (*Juan Flamenco*), who was requested to

149 J. Foucart, “Michel Sittow,” in: *La pintura gòtica hispanoflamenca. Bartolomé Bermejo i la seva època*, (in Spanish: *La pintura gòtica hispanoflamenca*.

execute the altarpiece of St. John the Baptist for the Miraflores Charterhouse, near Burgos (1496–1499). The artists jointly created a series of forty-seven small panels, measuring c. 21–21.5 x 15.5–16.5cm each and together created a narrative from the life of Christ and the Virgin.¹⁵⁰ The set was designed gradually, from c. 1496 or 1500 until the death of the donor in 1504. Most panels were painted by Juan de Flandes, as can be inferred from their style. At least two were executed by Sittow – the *Ascension* (Brocklesby Park, Habrough,

Bartolomé Bermejo y su época), ed. by F. Ruiz i Quesada, exh. cat., Museo Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona – Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao 2003, cat. no. 65. Previously Sittow was considered a painter trained exclusively in the milieu of Hans Memling: J. Trizna, *Michel Sittow, peintre revalais de l'école brugeoise (1468–1525/1526)*, (Contributions à l'étude des Primitifs flamands 6), Brussels 1976. For *Michel Sittow* in general cf.: J. Trizna, *Michel Sittow, peintre revalais...*; M.J. Liebmann, "Michael Sittow, burgher of Tallinn and court painter of Queen Isabella of Castile (additions and specifications)," in: *España entre el Mediterraneo y el Atlantico, Actas del XXIII. Congreso internacional de historia del arte*, (congress: University of Granada 1976), 3 vols., Granada 1976–1978, vol. 2., 1977, pp. 339–343; R. Rebas, "Der Maler Michel Sittow. Entdeckung u. Entwicklungsfragen," in: *Geschichte der Kunst in Estland und Lettland* (conference: "Homburger Gespräch," Bad Homburg 1983), ed. by E. Böckler, Bad Homburg 1983, pp. 44–50; E. Haverkamp-Begemann, "Paintings by Michiel Sittow reconsidered," in: *Rubens and His World. Bijdragen, etudes, studies, Beiträge*, ed. by A. Balis, F. Baudouin, Antwerp 1985, pp. 1–8; R. Rebas, "Der Maler Michel Sittow," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der baltischen Kunst*, [Giessen] 1988, pp. 211–242; C. Morte García, "Artistas de la corte de los reyes Católicos en Zaragoza," *Archivo español de arte* 70, 1997, pp. 426–430; M. Weniger, "Bynnen Brugge in Flandern: The apprenticeships of Michel Sittow and Juan de Flandes," in: *Memling Studies...*, pp. 115–131; *Michel Sittow, 1469–1525: The Artist Connecting Estonia with the Southern Netherlands*, ed. by T. Abel, The Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn 2001; Ch. Ishikawa, *The "Retablo de Isabel la Católica" by Juan de Flandes and Michel Sittow*, Turnhout 2004; M. Frinta, "Observation on Michel Sittow," *Artibus et historiae* 30, 2009, no. 60, pp. 139–156; M. Weniger, *Sittow, Morros, Juan de Flandes. Drei Maler aus dem Norden am Hof Isabellas der Katholischen*, Kiel 2011; *Michel Sittow: Estonian Painter at the courts of Renaissance Europe*, ed. by J.O. Hand, G. Koppel, with contributions by T.-H. Borchert et al., exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington – Art Museum of Estonia, Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, Washington–Tallinn 2018.

150 I. Vandevivere, *Juan de Flandes*, exh. cat., Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid 1986; M. Comblen-Sonkes, Ph. Lorentz, *Musée du Louvre, Paris, II (Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux...)*, Brussels 1995, s.v. *Juan de Flandes*; J.O. Hand, M. Wolff, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, coll. cat., National

Lincolnshire, Count of Yarborough Collection) and the *Assumption of the Virgin* (Washington, National Gallery of Art) [figs. 236–237]. The inventory of Isabella's daughter-in-law, Margaret of Austria, the governor of the Habsburg Netherlands, who inherited from her brother thirty-two panels from the cycle, bought by Philip the Beautiful from Diego Flores, the Queen's treasurer. In the inventory of 1516, master 'Michiel' is named as their author – undoubtedly Michel Sittow. It is possible that a third artist was engaged in painting the cycle, namely Felipe Morros or Morras, a painter from Picardy and a manuscript illuminator, active at Isabella's court from 1499.¹⁵¹

Gallery of Art, Washington 1986, pp. 136 ff.; L. Campbell, *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Schools. National Gallery Catalogues*, London 1998, pp. 260–266; C. Garrido, "Le processus créatif chez Juan de Flandes," in: *Le dessin sous-jacent... X, 1993* (1995), pp. 21–29; Ph. Lorentz, M. Comblen-Sonkes, *Musée du Louvre, Paris, III (Corpus...)*, no. 188 (Groupe Sittow, *Le Couronnement de la Vierge*); Ch. Ishikawa, *The 'Retablo de Isabel la Católica' ...*; P. Silva Maroto, *Juan de Flandes*, Salamanca 2006, pp. 167–256; M.A. Zalama, P. Vandebroeck et al., *Felipe I el Hermoso. La belleza y la locura*, exh. cat., Centro de Estudios Europa Hispanica, Burgos 2006, pp. 36–42, 278–279; M.W. Ainsworth, "Juan de Flandes, Chameleon Painter," in: *Invention: Northern Renaissance Studies...*, pp. 105–123; C. García-Frías-Checa, "Tablas procedentes del Políptico de la Reina Isabel la Católica," in: *Carlos IV. Mecenas y coleccionista*, ed. by J. Jordán de Urriés, J.L. Sancho, exh. cat., Patrimonio Nacional. Madrid 2009, cat. no. 70–73; *Skarby Korony Hiszpańskiej*, ed. by J.G. Moya Valgañón et al., exh. cat., Muzeum Narodowe, Cracow 2011, cat. no. 4; M. Weniger, *Sittow, Morros, Juan de Flandes...*; J. Weiss, "Relics of 'Los Reyes Católicos': the 'Retablo de Isabel' and Spanish-Habsburg dynastic heirlooms," in: *Imagery and Ingenuity in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by C. Ingersoll, A. McCusker, J. Weiss, Turnhout 2018, pp. 165–180; her, "Juan de Flandes and his financial success in Castile," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 11, 2019, no. 1 (on-line).

151 M. Weniger, *Bynnen Brugge in Flanders...*, p. 118; M. Weniger, *Sittow, Morros, Juan de Flandes...*



Fig. 236: Michel Sittow, *The Ascension*, Brocklesby Park, Habrough, Lincolnshire, Count of Yarborough Collection



Fig. 237: Michel Sittow, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1965 (1965.1.1)



Fig. 238: Juan de Flandes, *Christ in the House of Simon*, Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real



Fig. 239: Juan de Flandes, *The Raising of Lazarus*, Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real



Fig. 240: Juan de Flandes, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real



Fig. 241: Juan de Flandes, *Christ Appearing to the Virgin*, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 242: Juan de Flandes, *Christ Appearing to the Virgin and to the Souls of the Old Testament Patriarchs*, London, The National Gallery



Fig. 243: Juan de Flandes, *The Marriage Feast at Cana*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, B. & J. Linsky Collection



Fig. 244: Juan de Flandes, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*, Paris, Musée du Louvre



Fig. 245: Juan de Flandes, *The Nailing to the Cross*, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, emäldegalerie



Fig. 246: Juan de Flandes, *The Temptation of Christ*, Washington, The National Gallery of Art



Fig. 247: Juan de Flandes, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, Paris, Louvre

From the original set twenty-seven panels survive today. Apart from the aforementioned works by Sittow, they include paintings by Juan de Flandes [figs. 238–247] – fifteen panels now in Palacio Real in Madrid: *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, *Christ in the House of Simon*, *The Feeding of the Multitudes*, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, *The Transfiguration*, *The Raising of Lazarus*, *The Entry into Jerusalem*, *The Arrest of Christ*, *Christ before Pilate*, *The Mocking of Christ*, *The Descent into Limbo*, *The Three Marys at the Tomb*, *Noli me tangere*, *The Supper at Emmaus* and *The Pentecost*; and individual panels in various museums and collections elsewhere: *The Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane* in Basel (the Lindenmeyer-Christ collection); *Christ Appearing to the Virgin* in Berlin (Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie); *Christ Crowned with Thorns* in Detroit (Institute of Arts); *The Last Supper* (Wellington Museum, Apsley House), and *Christ Appearing to the Virgin and to the Souls of the Old Testament Patriarchs* (the National Gallery), both in London; *The Wedding at Cana* in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Collection B. & J. Linsky); *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well* in Paris (the Louvre), *The Carrying of the Cross* and *The Nailing to the Cross* in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum), and lastly *The Temptation of Christ* in Washington (the National Gallery of Art). Perhaps *The Coronation of the Virgin*, now in the Louvre, also belonged to the cycle, but its dimensions are slightly larger: 24.7 × 18.3cm (the dimensions of the panel: 25.9 × 19.6cm).¹⁵²

The list of the original forty-seven panels is included in the post-mortem inventory of Isabella of Castile, drafted on 25 February 1505 in the palace in Toro. They are organised roughly according to the chronology of the Biblical narrative, from the *Flight into Egypt* to the *Coronation of the Virgin*, but not following a strict order of events: the *Crucifixion* is listed before the *Transfiguration*, the *Last Supper*, the *Arrest of Christ*, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, and the *Nailing to the Cross*. These scenes are followed, in a departure from the correct sequence of the Biblical narrative, by the depictions of *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well* and *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, after which the Passion theme continues with *The Agony in the Garden* and *Ecce Homo*, and also the *Visitation*, *The Three Marys at the Tomb* and *The Nativity*. Is this simply a result of the notary's whimsical approach, or are these inconsistencies a result of taking the panels in groups from the place in which they were stored and, in each instance, assembling them in partial sequences?

152 About the unlikely, though not improbable provenance of the painting to the series see: Ph. Lorentz, M. Comblen-Sonkes, *Musée du Louvre, Paris, III (Corpus...)*, no. 188; J. Foucart, in: *La pintura gòtica hispanoflamenca. Bartolomé Bermejo i la seva època*, cat. no. 65.

The inventory of 1505 specifies that Isabella's panels were kept in the Toro palace inside an *armorio*, a chest. They were subsequently held by Margaret of Austria in her palace in Mechelen a similar fashion – in a chest of pine wood (*layette de sapin*), as recorded in the inventory of 1516. The placement of the panels inside the chest did not have to mean that the cycle was incomplete, and that only when finished would the panels have been framed to form a retable. The approach seems permanent, however, as Margaret continued Isabella's fashion of storing the panels in a chest. She kept the paintings in her bedchamber for eleven years. Subsequently, according to the inventory of 1523/1524 she had the panels (perhaps only a part of the entire collection) framed into two 'tablets' – diptychs, one of which she gave to Charles V, her nephew. Therefore, these works were not designed to be hung on the walls of the Queen's residence in Medina or Toro, but to be taken out of the chest, examined individually or in sets, and not necessarily as an entire cycle, to always be viewed as a whole. They were intended as objects of physical manipulation. They could be laid on a table like playing cards, or viewed as a series of prints. Alternatively, if all the panels were taken out of the chest, they could be arranged in various thematic sequences, or assembled into groups and arrays in different configurations. Each panel could be inspected up-close, admired for its particular artistic quality or devotional message. Once could shuffle and display these objects in much the same way as playing cards.

There are no reasons to distrust the inventories of 1505 and 1516. They are straightforward. Jacques Foucart speculated whether the *armorio* of Isabella of Castile was not in fact a retable, a winged triptych or diptych, which when folded formed a chest; or that perhaps it was a reliquary with shutters.¹⁵³ The inventory describes it simply as: a chest (*armorio*) and casket (*layette*), and not as a decorative *retablo* or *retable*. If the object was in fact a reliquary this would surely be recorded in the document, given the symbolic and monetary value of relics and the widely known piety of Queen Isabella.

The fact that panels are without carved frames and their edges are gilded seems to confirm that they were intended to be stored in such a way from the outset. The gilding has survived in a good or fragmentary condition on many of these panels – on paintings in the National Gallery in Washington (*The Temptation of Christ*), at the Louvre (*Christ and the Samaritan Woman*), the Metropolitan Museum in New York (*The Wedding at Cana*), in the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid (*Christ*

153 J. Foucart, in: *La pintura gòtica hispanoflamenca. Bartolomé Bermejo i la seva època*, pp. 440 and 581.

at the Sea of Galilee), in Apsley House in London (*The Last Supper*), in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and in the National Gallery in London (*The Resurrected Christ Appearing to the Virgin and to the Souls of the Old Testament Patriarchs*). The lack of heavy frames, which were substituted by the gilded edges, assisted the manual handling of the panels.

The intended display of these paintings explains their unconventional iconography, which includes unusual themes, such as the Christ appearing not only to the Virgin but also to the Old Testament patriarchs (the panel in London). Thus, it was a cycle for meditation and religious contemplation, which, at the same time, provided a connoisseurial delight to the beholder able to recognise less commonly known episodes from the Gospel. It offered various riddles, which we would today call iconological: where to place an unusual scene, and in which context or in which moment of the narrative. Many tablets had to be laid on the table, and rearranged, to finally reveal their correct sequence.

III.2. Moveable objects: open and closed, folded and unfolded, assembled and disassembled

Conservation and technological research into Netherlandish and Northern European Old Master paintings, such as the *Seilern Triptych* made by the older of the two main workshops active in the circle of Robert Campin (London, Courtauld Institute and Art Gallery) [fig. 248],¹⁵⁴ reveal that in various parts of these paintings (in this example, the face and feet of the crucified Christ, who has been taken down from the cross and is about to be entombed), the paint is visibly abraded, seemingly because of some mechanical use. This may confirm that these objects were treated in a particular way: that they were frequently touched in these places, or kissed. They were held in hands, kissed, brought closer to the face and eyes, even fondled. They had to be mobile and animated.¹⁵⁵ The *Seilern Triptych* is of considerable dimensions (65.2 × 107.2cm), but one could nevertheless move, place, open and close it.

154 *Seilern Triptych* from the workshop of Robert Campin: B.G. Lane, “‘Depositio et Elevatio’: The symbolism of the Seilern Triptych,” *The Art Bulletin* 57, 1975, no. 1, pp. 21–30; B.G. Lane, *The Altar and Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in the Early Netherlandish Paintings*, New York 1984, pp. 99–100; C. Villers, R. Bruce-Gardner, “The Entombment Triptych in the Courtauld Institute Gallery,” in: *Robert Campin: New Directions in Scholarship*, ed. by S. Foister, S. Nash, Turnhout 1996, pp. 27–35; L. Nys, “Le Triptyque Seilern: une nouvelle hypothèse,” *Revue de l’Art* 139, 2003, pp. 5–20; L.F. Jacobs, *Opening Doors...*, pp. 43–48.

155 S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 61.



Fig. 248: Master from the workshop of Robert Campin, the Older Group of Master of Flémalle – Master of the Seilern Triptych, *The Triptych of Entombment (Seilern Triptych)*, London, The Courtauld Gallery, The Princes Gate Collection

The lack of hooks in the frames of paintings that were seemingly intended to be hung on a wall, as in the case of the *Portrait of His Wife, Margaret* by Jan van Eyck (1439, Bruges, Groeningemuseum, 41.2 × 34.5cm, with the frame), proves that their hanging was in fact impossible [fig. 249].¹⁵⁶ Therefore, they must have been placed on a shelf, table or another piece of furniture and perhaps frequently moved. We know from written accounts (though later), that the portrait of Van Eyck's wife was displayed in the chapel of the painters' guild in Bruges, which by the sixteenth century had already become a type of gallery of famous artists, as confirmed by Dürer's account of his trip to the Netherlands in 1521. Perhaps the painting belonged to a pair of panels, of which the latter – *pendant* – was the self-portrait of the artist. Van Eyck's self-portrait was stolen in the eighteenth century from the gallery, which means that it was originally displayed there together with the portrait of his wife.¹⁵⁷

156 H. Verougstraete, R. van Schoute, "Frames and Supports in Campin's Time," in: *Robert Campin: New Directions...*, pp. 87–93, on p. 91.

157 E. Dhanens, *Hubert and Jan van Eyck*, pp. 188–192, 302–306.



Fig. 249: Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of His Wife, Margaret*, 1439, Bruges, Groeningemuseum

The fifteenth-century works of art were often moveable. As we have already seen, the covers of the books were open, pages could be flipped through, or turned over in search for a specific prayer or illumination; the prayer nuts were unfolded, untwisted and opened; metalwork was hidden in chests and taken out so that artwork could be displayed and moved around in different spaces; various miniature paintings were placed like playing cards or prints on a table. Tapestries were unfolded and folded, and hung, (though not necessarily that they would lie flat), on the wall. Winged altarpieces were continuously opened and closed. Sculpted figures had animated limbs. From codices miniatures were cut out and affixed to the walls; individual prints were being circulating widely. Considering their structures, it is clear that various scientific instruments, clocks and automata were intended to be moved.

However, of all these mobile and moveable things, diptychs and triptychs enjoyed the highest popularity.

III.2.1. Diptychs – manual operations

In the category of moveable things that were activated by the viewer, a special role was played by diptychs.¹⁵⁸ The sequence of openings and the order of viewing individual panels were important both in operational and symbolic terms.

The *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove* by Hans Memling (1487, Bruges, Groeningemuseum, each wing 52 × 41.5cm with frames) has a verso with a portrait of the donor in a richly moulded frame (the more decorative of the Diptych) – which means that this side was to cover the image of the Virgin and Child, revealed to the viewer when the wing is open [fig. 250].¹⁵⁹ Only as a third, appearing when the diptych was fully open, was the neighbouring portrait of Maarten [fig. 251]. This order was important for the hierarchy of messages, discussed here in chapter I.1], which I should recapitulate. Maarten is the main figure in this work [fig. 252]. The diptych shows him in the key moment of maturity, as defined by fifteenth-century Netherlandish society – still innocent, a youthful virgin, but already an adult as an active member of a patrician family from Bruges, inspired by saintly knights (Martin, George, and Christopher) and patrons of merchants (Christopher), depicted in colourful stained-glass windows [see fig. 4]. We see a twenty-three-year-old man (his age inscribed on the frame), therefore, in the moment of attaining legal and civil adulthood. The lesson about the sexuality of young men subjected to the general rule of premarital abstinence is demonstrated here in a vision of the immaculate

158 L. Gelfand, *Fifteenth-Century Netherlandish Devotional Portrait-Diptychs: Originals and Functions*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Case Western Reserve University 1994; J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*; A. Acres, “The Middle of Diptychs,” in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. I, pp. 595–621; I. Falque, *Devotional Portraiture and Spiritual Experience in Early Netherlandish Painting*, Leiden–Boston 2019, passim.

159 *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove* by Hans Memling; H. Belting, Ch. Kruse, *Die Erfindung des Gemäldes...*, pp. 257–258; De Vos Memling 1994, no. 78; De Vos, *Hans Memling* (exh. cat.), cat. no. 33; J.C. Wilson, *Painting in Bruges at the Close of the Middle Ages: Studies in Society and Visual Culture*, University Park (Penn.) 1998, pp. 51–52; T.-H. Borchert et al., *De portretten van Memling*, cat. no. 23; J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 26; R.L. Falkenburg, “Hans Memling’s Van Nieuwenhove Diptych: The Place of Prayer in Early Netherlandish Devotional Painting,” in: *Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych: Essays in Context*, pp. 92–109; B. Lane, *Memling* 2009, no. 14; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 60; A. Ziemba,

purity of Christ and the Virgin. Physicality is pardoned through the perfect and complete Incarnation of God in Christ, whose human nature also included His physical sex and (unexplored, but present) sexuality, hence the motif of the so-called showing of Christ's genitalia (*ostentatio genitalium*).¹⁶⁰

Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów..., vol. II, pp. 566–568 (with bibliography in notes); M. Rimmele, “Memlings Mantelteilung. Der Marienmantel als Schwellenmotiv,” in: *Bild-Riss*, 2015, pp. 101–126. For the technical examinations see: D. Hollanders-Favart, “Le dessin sous-jacent chez Memling. Le diptyque dit de Martin van Nieuwenhove (1487), apport de la photographie à l’infrarouge,” in: *Archivum artis lovaniense. Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de kunst der Nederlanden opgedragen aan Prof. Em. Dr. J. K. Steppe*, ed. by M. Smeyers, Leuven 1981, pp. 79–84; D. Hollanders-Favart, “A propos de l’élaboration du diptyque van Nieuwenhove,” in: *Le dessin sous-jacent... IV, 1981* (1982), pp. 103–106; T.-H. Borchert, “Le dessin sous-jacent chez Memling,” in: Ph. Lorentz, T.-H. Borchert, *Hans Memling au Louvre*, Musée du Louvre, Paris 1995, pp. 80–90; D. De Vos, “De constructie van Memlings Van Nieuwenhove-portret. Een probleem van interpretatie van de voorbereidende tekening,” *Oud Holland* 100, 1986, pp. 165–170; M.W. Ainsworth, *Spaarzame middelen, opmerkelijke resultaten...*, M.W. Ainsworth, “Spaarzame middelen, opmerkelijke resultaten. De schildertechniek van Memlings portretten,” in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *De portretten van Memling*, pp. 93–111, here pp. 98–99.

160 As discussed in Leo Steinberg's book *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (1983, revised edition Chicago 1996).

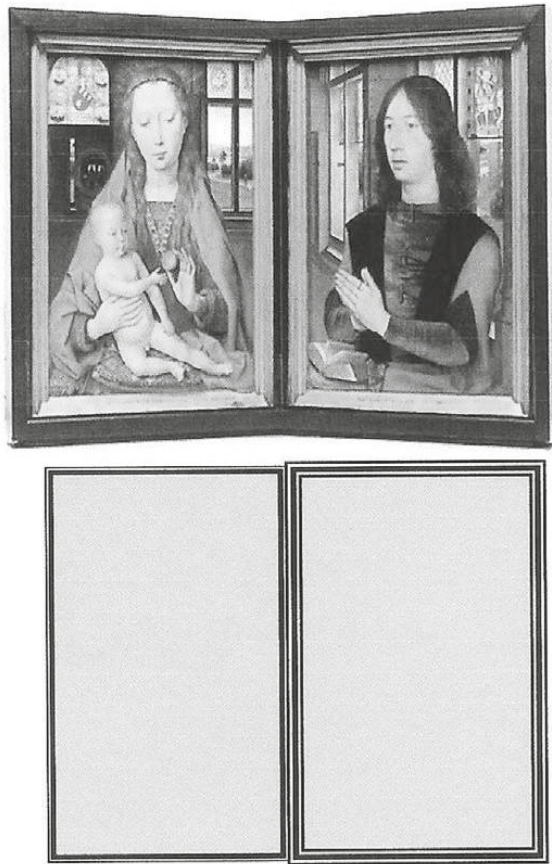


Fig. 250: Hans Memling, *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove*, 1487, Bruges, Sint Janshospitaal – open diptych and an outline of the framing of the verso panels



Fig. 251: Hans Memling, *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove* – sequece of the openings



Fig. 252: Hans Memling, *Diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove* – panel with a portrait of the donor

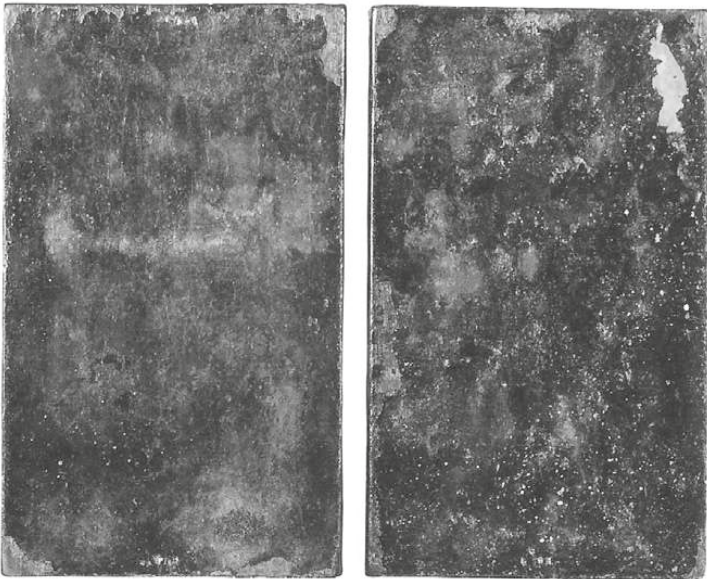


Fig. 253: Jan van Eyck, *Diptych of the Annunciation*, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, reverses



Fig. 254: Jan van Eyck, *Diptych of the Annunciation*, c. 1435–1440, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, sequence of the views

The aforementioned *Diptych of the Annunciation* in the Museo Thyssen in Madrid [fig. 211, 253–254] had painted porphyry on its back, without any frame.¹⁶¹ With the wings shut the object resembled a block of stone. When someone discovered that it was merely a painterly illusion he or she would open this folded altarpiece, curious of what was inside. The viewer saw two wings, filled with painterly illusion: white sandstone statues against a black stone in porphyry frame. He/she was reminded of the same dynamics of interaction as with the large and medium-size triptychs or polyptychs. Therefore, one expected to be able to open the wings again to reveal another view. But in this instance the beholder could not see anything else, as the object was a diptych not a triptych. The painterly form, the shape of the object and the illusionistic quality of depictions forced the viewer to move, to manipulate and to become active. This meant that the object was designed to be viewed with admiration, as a connoisseur's and a collectable item. At that time collecting was a privilege of the elite, most frequently of the court, who greatly praised visual games and an aesthetic of monochromatic or tonal *en grisaille*, perceived as a courtly idiom of royal and ducal fashion.

Similarly, moveable to the *Diptych Nieuwenhove*, was the *Diptych of Jeanne de Boubais* painted by Jean Bellegambe in the early sixteenth century

161 Cf. note 133.

(created between 1507 and 1533), today in Pittsburgh (Frick Art and Historical Center).¹⁶² Its dimensions also helped the physical handling of object: 40.4 x 25.7cm (each wing) – not too imposing, of a size that would allow the wings to be moved easily, and to display the entire object either open or closed. The first view is on the verso of the right wing bearing the portrait of Jeanne de Boubais, the Cistercian abbess of the monastery of Flines [fig. 255]. One would try to read the in fact illegible inscription in the book, identify the coat-of-arms, or unravel the text embroidered on the altar cloth: *Ecce Panis Angelorum*, finally to look at the scene in the back, showing the two nuns, one reading a book (presumably a prayer book), and another one praying nearby, inside a large monastic chamber, richly decorated with glass windows, a clock on the wall, a carved wardrobe-dresser and an ornamental bed, typical for the representative rooms in the apartment of the high-born abbess. It is compelling to consider the displayed on the external panel, depicted twice, motif of reading as intended to recall the association between the diptych and a book – the open diptych, was looked at and ‘read’ as a book. The altarpiece would be like a book – held in the hands, unfolded during prayer (reading), and again closed. But this diptych opens differently to a book, as if from the back cover. In any case, the subject of the prayer and reading was revealed with the wing open [fig. 256]: the Virgin and Child with a rosary swinging to the right, as if over his mother’s arm. This twisted pose of the Christ Child encouraged the viewer to open the wing even wider. Only when the diptych was fully open could the beholder see the front of the moveable panel – a portrait, of an unidentified Cistercian abbot, introduced by St. Bernard of Clairvaux [fig. 257]. It is him – the abbot – to whom Christ directed his gesture. But it was her – the abbess – who initiated with her image the entire process of consecutive views. She introduced the proper prayer – the rosary.

162 *Diptych of Jeanne de Boubais* by Jean Bellegambe: A.G. Pearson, “Nuns, Images, and the Ideals of Women’s Monasticism: Two Paintings from the Cistercian Convent of Flines,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, 2001, 4, pp. 1356–1402; A.G. Pearson, *Envisioning Gender in Burgundian Devotional Art, 1350–1530: Experience, Authority, Resistance*, (series: Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Aldershot 2005; J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 1.



Fig. 255: Jean Bellegambe and his workshop, *Diptych of Jeanne de Bouvais, the Cistercian Abbess of the Monastery of Flines*, between 1507 and 1533, Pittsburgh, Frick Art and Historical Center, 1970.36 – open diptych and its reverses



Fig. 256: Jean Bellegambe and his workshop, *Diptych of Jeanne de Bouvais* – sequence of the opening



Fig. 257: Jean Bellegambe and his workshop, *Diptych of Jeanne de Bouvais* – open

I write ‘recto’ and ‘verso,’ but in fact these traditional terms, adopted from the vocabulary used to describe open triptychs (which for the many days of the liturgical year remained shut), cannot be readily applied to this object. The recto is the traditional verso here – the image of the abbess on the external part of the left wing, whilst the verso – the image on the back of this panel, with the abbot and St. Bernard of Clairvaux – is what we referred to us recto. The second wing – the one with the Virgin – has only the recto, as its back was not painted and could not be seen. However, if the image of the abbot and the saint is on the verso of the moveable wing, the recto of the immovable wing should be one also. Whichever term we use to describe the front and back of the wings, and it is important in establishing the order of viewing of the two panels and the movement of the diptych, it seems clear that the object stood against a wall or hung on it with one wing remaining moveable. This was not an unusual situation – diptychs with three painted panels were common. This system was introduced already in the diptych listed in an inventory of goods of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, on 7th June 1404 and described as showing

the Virgin and two portraits: that of the Duke, and of his successor John the Fearless.¹⁶³

A three-sided diptych by Hugo van der Goes in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum) [figs. 258–259], because of its dimensions (each panel 33.4 × 22.8cm) was fairly easy to manipulate; it opened in reverse order when compared to the previous example by Jean Bellegambe. On its ‘cover’ it showed at first St. Genevieve painted *en grisaille* (the verso of the left panel), and later, following the opening: The Fall and the Lamentation.¹⁶⁴ To the same side as the *Diptych of Jeanne de Boubais* opened diptychs executed by Rogier van der Weyden and his workshop: Philippe de Croy (The Virgin: Huntington Library, San Marino; the portrait: Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten; each 51.5 × 33.6cm) and Jean de Froimont (The Virgin: Caën, Musée des Beaux-Arts; the portrait: Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts; each panel 51.5 × 33.5cm) [fig. 260]. At first the viewer saw on the ‘cover’ the coat-of-arms with a motto (or a coat-of-arms with the patron saint of the family); subsequently one saw the Virgin, and in the end, with the wings fully parted – the image of the owner. Their dimensions were rather prominent, and it would have been hard to manipulate them if they were standing. Consequently, it seems probable that they hung on the wall and that they were opened and closed in that position.

In a yet different way, the beholder interacted with four-sided diptychs. Separated today, the *Diptych of Lodovico Portinari*, painted in Bruges by the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula (left wing with the Virgin: Harvard University Art Museums, Fogg Art Museum, Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop; right wing with the portrait: the Philadelphia Museum of Art) had both versos painted [fig. 261].¹⁶⁵ In the left panel against the red background there is a trigram IHS in radiant glory, and at the right the coat-of-arms with a donor and a banderol with the initials LP. Therefore, the diptych was intended to be viewed from both sides. It could not have hung affixed to the wall, but it was probably displayed in various locations. For instance, it may have been extracted from a chest or removed from a bookshelf, placed on a table, and constantly unfolded and folded; in a vertical or perhaps even in a horizontal position, it was flipped through and turned over as a book with hard covers. The same rule of operating the sides and views governs the *Diptych of Jean Gros* by Rogier van der Weyden (the

163 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no.1, p. 11 and note 29.

164 *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 12.

165 *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 12, pp. 9–10 and 18–19.

Virgin: Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts; the portrait: Chicago Art Institute) [figs. 262–263].¹⁶⁶ On both versos there are painted emblems, mottos and coat-of-arms of the owner. This diptych, by contrast to the aforementioned three-sided altarpieces by Rogier and his workshop, was sufficiently small (folded it measures just 38.7 x 28.6cm), for its wings to be easily turned over, as one would do with the pages of a book. This type of object could be hung by chains on the walls (see below).



Fig. 258: Hugo van der Goes, *St. Genevieve*, verso of the left panel with the *Fall*, diptych from Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 259: Hugo van der Goes, *Lamentation* and *The Fall*, diptych, c. 1470–1480, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie

166 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 37.

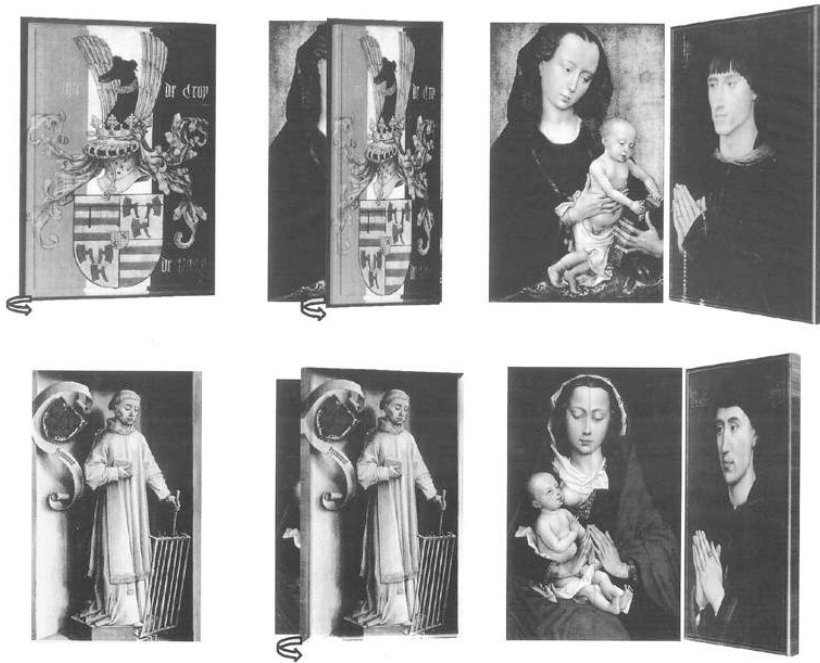


Fig. 260: Rogier van der Weyden and his workshop, the *Diptych of Philippe de Croy*, c. 1460–1464 (Madonna: San Marino, Huntington Library; portrait: Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) and the *Diptych of Jean de Froimont*, c. 1461–1475 (Madonna: Caën, Musée des Beaux-Arts; portrait: Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts) – sequence of the views

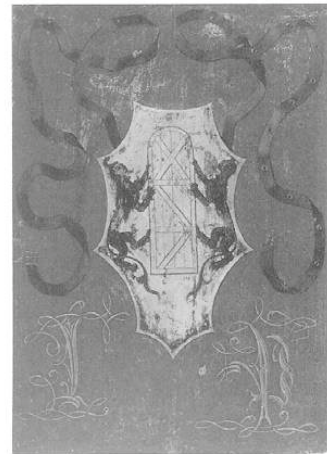


Fig. 261: Master of the Legend of St. Ursula, *Diptych of Lodovico Portinari*, before 1469?, left panel with the Virgin : Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1943.97; right panel with the portrait, Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection – recto and verso of both panels



Fig. 262: Rogier van der Weyden, *Diptych of Jean Gros*, c. 1461–1464 (the Virgin: Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts; portrait: Chicago Art Institute, M.A. Ryerson Collection, 1933.1051) – recto and verso of both panels

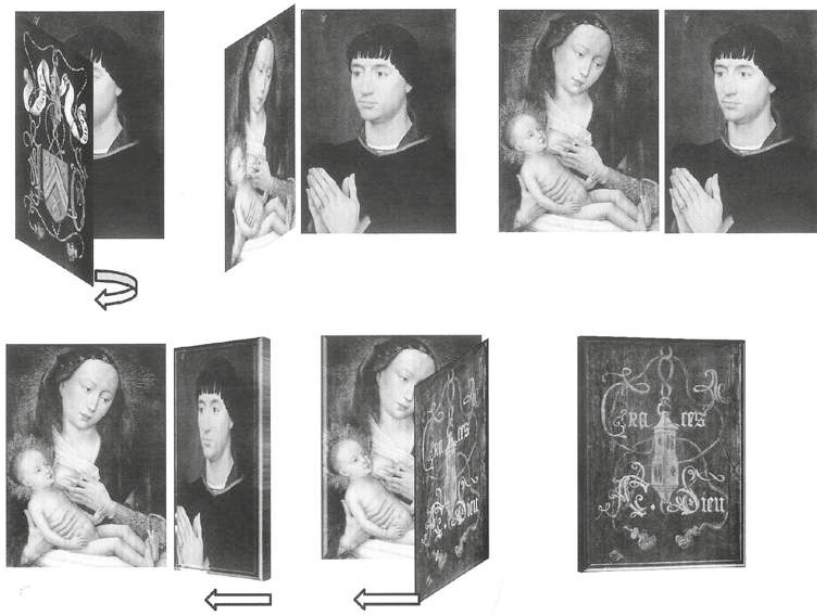


Fig. 263: Rogier van der Weyden, *Diptych of Jean Gros* – diagram showing the sequence of the work's views



Fig. 264: Nicolas Froment or a follower, *Diptych of Matheron*, c. 1479–1480, Paris, Musée du Louvre



Fig. 265: Red velvet pouch to store and transport the *Diptych of Matheron*, Paris, Musée du Louvre

The *Diptych of Matheron* dated c. 1479–1480 (perhaps retouched on the versos in 1485), now at the Louvre, has a similar structure to the triptych discussed above [fig. 264].¹⁶⁷ It is attributed to Nicolas Froment or to his workshop, although this attribution has no solid base apart from the fact that the portraits of the same royal couple appear on the wings of the *Triptych of the Burning Bush* painted by the artist in 1475–1476, and preserved in Aix-en-Provence. When open the diptych shows two portraits: King René d’Anjou and his wife Jeanne de Laval. It is considered to have been a gift from the king to his faithful confidant, advisor and a nobleman of his court, Jean Matheron, *maître rational*, and court councillor since 1470. His coat-of-arms with its family mottos is depicted twice on the versos of the two panels. Following the death of René d’Anjou in 1480, Matheron became the head of the tax chamber in Provence (1487) and entered the service of Charles VIII, the French king, who was responsible for incorporating Provence into French territory. Perhaps it was only at that time that the heraldic lilies were painted on the versos of the wings. However, this recent hypothesis is not thoroughly convincing: *fleur-de-lis* were not only the symbol of the French monarchy but were also more

167 *France 1500...*, cat. no. 18 (with further bibliography).

generally lilies of the Valois dynasty, to which belonged the Anjou dukes (Valois-Anjou);¹⁶⁸ the shape of the lilies on the versos does not allow for them to be placed *lamel* – a heraldic trace, defining the collateral line of the family succession, to which René d'Anjou belonged. At the front of the open diptych he wears the order of St. Michael, founded in August 1469 by Louis XI, his nephew, and is therefore characterised as a loyal subordinate to the French king. Perhaps the diptych was not a gift from René to Jean Matheron, but a work commissioned by Matheron himself, to commemorate the king *post mortem*. Perhaps therefore it was created c. 1480 to stress the previous rank of the owner as a dignitary of the royal court, and as a subject of the King of France (by then the current sovereign of Provence), *and* as a subject of the Valois family, which included both the royal and the ducal line of the d'Anjou dynasty.

In this diptych the sequence of the views also opens with the coat-of-arms of the owner – depicted twice. Thus, the side from which one commenced viewing the diptych was irrelevant. This object is also interesting because a red velvet pouch survives with it, which was clearly designed for the diptych to be stored in. Consequently, we know that each interaction with this handy altarpiece of small dimensions (folded it measures only 17.7 x 13.4cm) began with its extraction from the pouch [fig. 265]. After this, one could open it as a book, resting it on a cushion or directly on a table, or holding it in hands.

168 Marie-Claude Léonelli, in: *France 1500...*



Fig. 266: André Beauneveu, *Duke Jean de Berry with Sts. Andrew and John the Baptist praying before the Virgin and Child*; illumination from the *Très Belles Heures du Duc de Berry*, 1400–1402, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms 11060, fol. 10v–11r



Fig. 267: *Prayer Book of Philip the Good* bound together with a small diptych, c. 1430–1450, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1800



Fig. 268: Master of the Benson Portraits, *Diptych with Portraits of the Anonymous Couple*, c. 1540–1550, Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh – open diptych and the panel joints in the form of a book spine

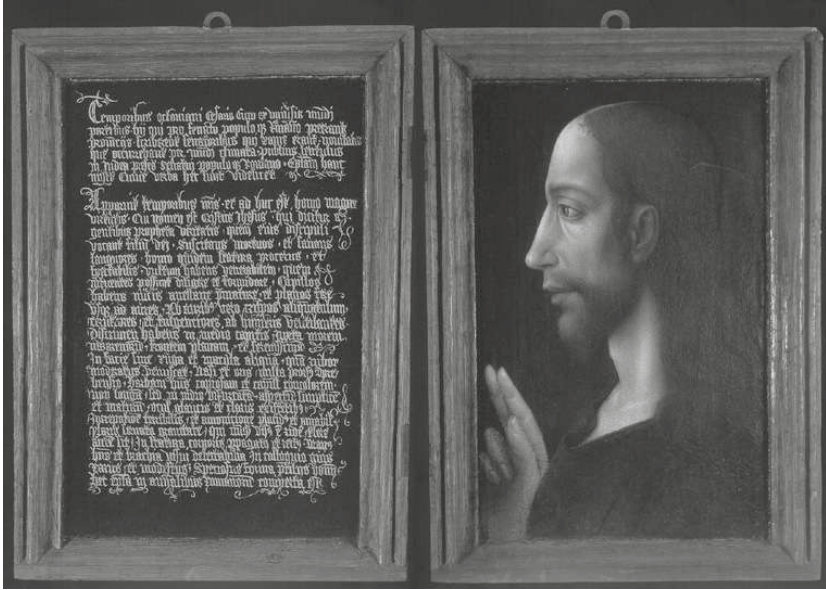


Fig. 269: Netherlandish Master, *Diptych with the Holy Face and the Letter of Lentulus*, c. 1500, Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent



Fig. 270a: Jean Perréal, *Double-portrait of the French King, Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany*, glued onto the lathing of a cover of a prayer book, c. 1490–1495, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. lat. 1190



Fig. 270b: Jean Perréal, *Double-portrait of the French King, Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany*, pages with prayers sliding in the cover of the book, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. lat. 1190

The custom of handling the diptych in the same way as a book results from the historic origins of this painting format. The formula of a devotional diptych with a portrait originates in the manuscript illuminations where the praying owner was depicted on a left-hand side page facing the image of the Virgin and Child on the neighbouring page. Such an arrangement is explored, for instance, in the pair of illuminations from the *Très Belles Heures du Duc de Berry* (c. 1396, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 11060/1, fols. 10–11), attributed to André Beauneveu [figs.

43, 266].¹⁶⁹ The prayer book of Philip the Good, the Duke of Burgundy, in Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna (Cod. 1800), created sometime between 1430 and 1450 [figs. 267, 496], is bound together with a small diptych showing the Crucifixion and the Coronation of the Virgin. The inventory of goods of Margaret of Austria of 1523 includes a note that in the Monastery of Brou she had ‘a richly decorated and very precious double painting’ with the portrait of the Duke Charles the Bold and the Virgin and Child, bound in green velvet and enclosed with clasps, which suggests that it was a diptych in the form of a book (unless the description refers to the pouch with clasps, as in the case of the *Diptych of Matheron*).¹⁷⁰ The diptych with the portraits of the anonymous couple by the Master of the Benson Portraits in the Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp (c. 1540–1550), is of miniature, handy dimensions (each wing measures 11.2 × 7.4cm). It has a frame that has external borders fixed by leather belts, and its profile when the wings are closed imitates the embossed leather spine of a volume [fig. 268]. Another quasi-book is the Netherlandish diptych from the Museum Het Catharijneconvent in Utrecht (c. 1500) [fig. 269], showing in the right panel the Holy Face – the portrait of Christ according to the description in a letter of Publius Lentulus, and in the left, written in gold letters, that apocryphal text; the work was both for viewing and reading.¹⁷¹

The diptychs that imitates books with their shape were widely disseminated in different parts of Europe. Two panels with the *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the *Dead Christ* attributed to Ercole de’ Roberti (the National Gallery, London), have their backs covered in purple velvet and were once decorated with clasps as book covers.¹⁷² The diptych with the portraits of the two wives of Sigismund Augustus, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania – Elisabeth of Habsburg and Barbara Radziwiłł – was painted on sheets of copper bound

169 F. Avril, in: *Paris 1400...*, cat. no. 45: S. Nash, T.-H. Borchert, J. Harris, “*Sans égal en aucun pays*”: *André Beauneveu. Artiste des cours de France et de Flandrie*, Musée Groeninge, Bruges 2007, pp. 182–186; T.-H. Borchert, “Color Lapidum: A Survey of Late Medieval Grisaille,” in: T.-H. Borchert, et al., *Jan van Eyck. Grisailles*, exh. cat., Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, 2009, p. 243.

170 D. Eichberger, “Devotional Objects in Book Format: Diptychs in the Collection of Margaret of Austria and her Family,” in: *The Art of the Book: Its Place in Medieval Worship*, eds. M.M. Manion, B.J. Muir, Exeter 1998, pp. 291–323; on p. 301, see especially note 47.

171 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 29.

172 L. Campbell, J. Dunkerton, J. Kirby, L. Monas, “Two panels by Ercole de’ Roberti and the identification of ‘Veluto Morello,’” *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 22, 2001, pp. 29–41.

in red velvet and fitted with clasps.¹⁷³ Jean Perréal, painter active in Lyon, created c. 1490–1495 a double-portrait, depicting probably the French King, Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 1190), which – though painted on panel – was glued onto the lathing of a cover of a prayer book [fig. 270].¹⁷⁴

These instances allow us to speculate that other diptychs must also have been treated as book codices, kept on bookshelves or in chests; sometimes in casings, extracted or taken down from a shelf, unfolded, read and examined and then folded back together again.

173 A. Dülberg, *Privatporträts. Geschichte und Ikonologie einer Gattung im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 1990, nos. 272–273, 275, figs. 27–28.

174 *France 1500...*, cat. no. 34.

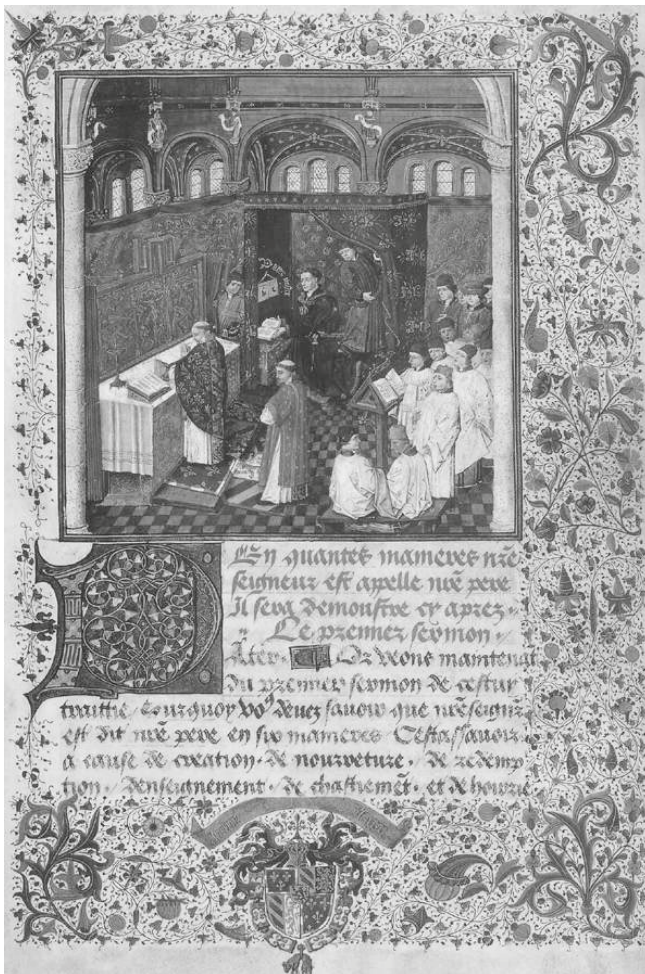


Fig. 271: Jean Le Tavernier, Illumination from the *Traité sur l'Oraison Dominicale*, after 1457, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9092, fol. 9r



Fig. 272: Jan Gossaert, *Diptych of Jean Carondelet*, 1517, Paris, Musée du Louvre – with hooks to enable the work's suspension on a wall



Fig. 273: Jan Gossaert, *Diptych of Jean Carondelet* – sequence of views



Fig. 274: Master of 1499, *Diptych of the Abbot Christiaan de Hondt*, 1499, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten – frontal view of the closed diptych, reverse of the left panel: *Christ as Salvator Mundi*

Fig. 275: Master of 1499, *Diptych of the Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* – left panel, visible when the diptych is fully open: *The Virgin and Child in the Church* (after *The Madonna in the Church* by Jan van Eyck, in Berlin, Gemäldegalerie)

Fig. 276: Master of 1499, *Diptych of Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* – right wing, panel visible during the opening of the diptych: *Portrait of Abbot Christiaan de Hondt*

Fig. 277: Master of 1499, *Diptych of Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* – verso of the right panel, visible when the diptych is closed: *Portrait of Abbot Robrecht de Clerc* (originally: panel with a fictive slab of porphyry)



Fig. 278: Master of 1499, *Diptych of Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* – reverses of the panels, viewed after the turning of the open diptych: *Portrait of Robrecht de Clerc, Abbot of Ter Duinen* and *Christ as Salvator Mundi*

At times diptychs hung on the wall, suspended from a chain affixed to each wing. This type of display is well documented by a small painted diptych in the background of the portrait of the donor of the *Diptych of the Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* by the Master of 1499 (1499, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) [figs. 274–278],¹⁷⁵ and in a miniature by Jean Le Tavernier in *Traité sur l’Oraison Dominicale* (after 1457, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, ms. 9092, fol. 9r) [fig. 271]. The *Diptych of Jean Carondelet* at the Louvre (1517), painted by Jan Gossaert [fig. 272] must have been displayed in a similar way. The hooks, which enabled the suspension of the object, survived attached to the corners of the wings. This mode of display facilitated the opening and closing of the diptych, and also showed any side of any wing [fig. 273]. This refers both to the three-leaved and four-leaved diptychs.

175 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 21.

The aforementioned *Diptych of the Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* (dimensions when folded 37.5 x 20.4cm) is a typical example of the four-sided sequence of viewing. One started from the 'cover' [fig. 274], occupied by the image of Christ – as *Salvator Mundi* in a quasi-architectural niche. When open the diptych showed the front of the second panel [fig. 275] – the portrait of Christiaan de Hondt, the abbot of the Monastery of Ter Duinen, near Bruges, depicted in his chamber, kneeling in prayer. We see to whom he directed his prayers when we glance at the back of the panel we just moved [fig. 276] – there depicted is the Virgin and Child, a replica of the famous *Madonna in the Church* by Jan van Eyck [fig. 201]. Only when we fold the diptych again and turn it over do we notice the image on the back of the object [fig. 277] – the portrait of Robrecht de Clerc, the abbot of the Monastery of Ter Duinen. The image was added subsequently, as De Clerc acted as the abbot between 1519 and 1557. In all likelihood, on that side the diptych was originally decorated with a painting of fictive porphyry. Therefore, in its previous state the altarpiece was viewed either according to the sequence described above or in reverse order, starting from the porphyry slab, and concluding with the image of Christ (in the following sequence: the praying donor, the addressees of de Hondt's devotions – the Virgin and Christ Child, and the goal of the prayer –salvation). In the new form, the diptych could be interpreted differently: de Clerc prays to the *Salvator Mundi* when the diptych is viewed starting from the back [fig. 278].

This rule of a twofold interpretation was fulfilled from the outset by a four-sided diptych by Hans Memling, which shows on the left wing St. John the Baptist with the lamb and skull in a niche on the back (Munich, Alte Pinakothek), and on the right wing St. Veronica with the impression of Christ's face on the sudarium, and on the back the chalice of St. John the Evangelist (Washington, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection) [fig. 279].¹⁷⁶ When it is folded it is rather small: 31.6 x 24.4cm. It could have been viewed panel after panel following the order of the opening of the wings: from the skull, through the image of Veronica and the face of Christ, and later – the figure of St. John and the eucharistic chalice, the attribute of St. John the Evangelist on the back of the diptych. But the viewer could similarly look at the two panels of the open diptych at the same time, one from the front and one from the back. Depending on whether one saw first the two figures of saints or the symbolic emblems, the skull and the chalice anticipated the presentation of the saints and introduced the prayer directed to them or formed a subsequent commentary.

176 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 25.

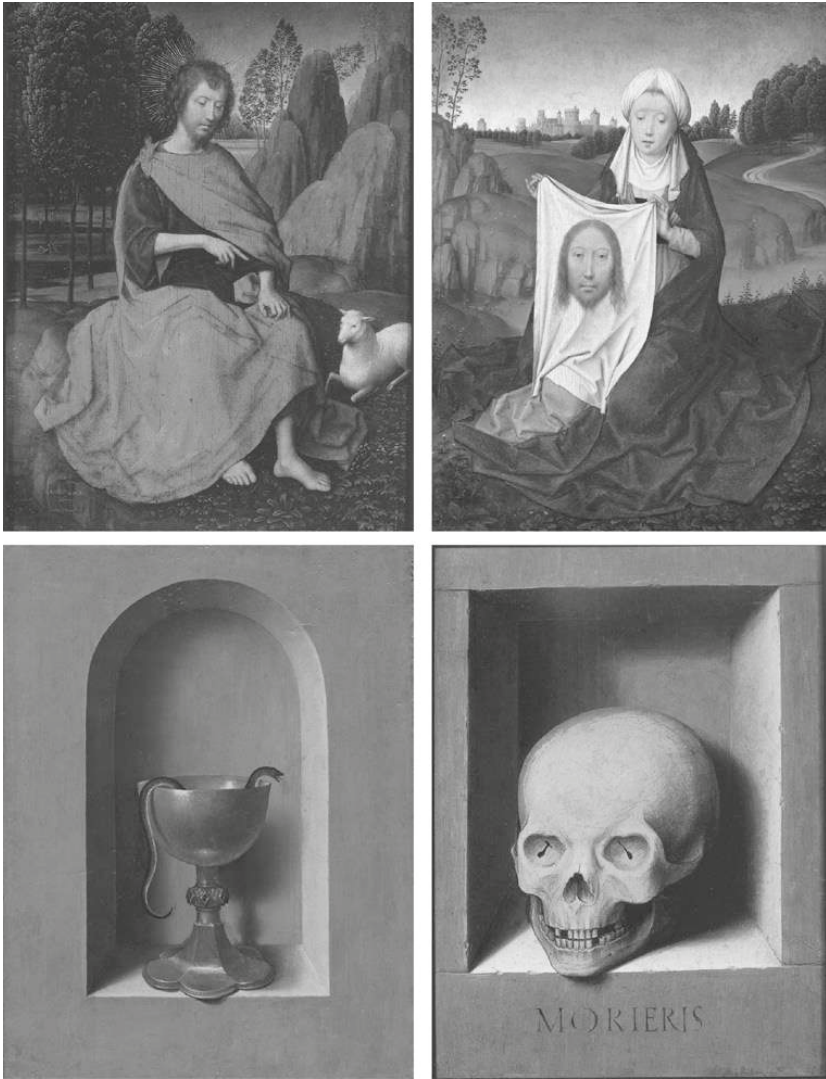


Fig. 279: Hans Memling, *Diptych of Bernardo Bembo: St. John the Baptist – Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, and St. Veronica – Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection, c. 1471–1474 or c. 1480–1483; rectos and versos of the panels*

As domestic altarpieces, diptychs could be placed on tables or other pieces of furniture open at a specific angle, which would prevent them from collapsing. They had to be viewed with wings set diagonally to the central panel, with scenes viewed at a specific angle. The artists considered this

intended mode of display [fig. 280]. The fully open wings of diptychs, which hung on walls in museums or are exhibited in cases, most frequently show the donors and the Virgin and Child looking into the distance, not at each other. Their gazes do not meet, there is no exchange between them. The situation seems irrational, against practical logic. However, with the partial opening of the wings the figures establish eye contact. This is therefore the correct way of viewing these panels, at an angle rather than frontally. For instance, it is only in this position that Jean Carondelet in the diptych by Gossaert at the Louvre [fig. 281] directs his gaze to the Christ Child with his hands clasped in prayer, at which glances the Virgin, the intercessor in this prayer. A different mode of viewing governs the diptych by the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula in Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) dated c. 1486 [fig. 282]¹⁷⁷: here the diagonally placed wings direct the gaze of the three donors depicted in the right panel to the Virgin in the left wing, who in turn, from under lowered eyelids, looks at the Christ Child on her lap and at the open book, on which the Child places his hand. Similarly, only the partially open panels of the *Diptych of the Abbot Christiaan de Hondt* described above ensure that the Virgin communicates with the donor, more specifically through the gaze of the abbot directed to the Christ Child, and the Virgin's eyes turned to De Hondt [fig. 283].

One could consider whether the symmetrical depiction of the figures on the wings of diptychs – apart from the obvious aspect of the balance of the composition – could not have carried an additional meaning. For instance, in the two diptychs by Quinten Massys with the Virgin and Christ as Salvator Mundi, one in Madrid (Prado, 1529), and the second in Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) [fig. 284],¹⁷⁸ the symmetry worked to seemingly bring together the hands and faces of the figures. This highlighted the physical contact between the mother and the son, whilst at the same time creating the impression that the Virgin in the diptych in Antwerp kisses the cheek of her son, and in the one from the Prado – the lips of Christ: this motherly kiss is a tribute to the Son of God. Additionally, in both works she touches His hands with her fingers. Therefore, it is possible that the symmetrically depicted faces of the donor and the Virgin in the *Diptych Nieuwenhove* by Memling, or of the Franciscan patron and Christ carrying the cross in the diptych of Jan Provoost in Bruges (Groeningemuseum, 1522) [fig. 285],¹⁷⁹ or in numerous other examples were carefully designed in such a way that the owner, adoring

177 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 24.

178 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 14 and 15.

179 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 31.

the Virgin or Christ, in the moment when the wings were folded proffered a kiss to the cheeks or lips of the adored holy figure. This would imaginatively reflect the process of the kissing of relics, thereby establishing the diptych as an object for private ritual, a personal talisman, which as I mentioned earlier was one of the key roles of these small devotional panels.



Fig. 280: Master of the Legend of Mary Magdalene, *Diptych of Willem van Bibaut*, 1523, private collection – showing the open diptych, and also with semi-open wings



Fig. 281: Jan Gossaert, *Diptych of Jean Carondelet* with open wings at an angle



Fig. 282: Master of the Legend of St. Ursula, *Diptych of an Unidentified Family*, 1486, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten



Fig. 283: Master of 1499, *Diptych of the Abbot Christiaan de Hondt*, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten



Fig. 284: Quinten Massys, *Diptych with the Virgin and Christ as Salvator Mundi*, 1529, Madrid, Museo del Prado

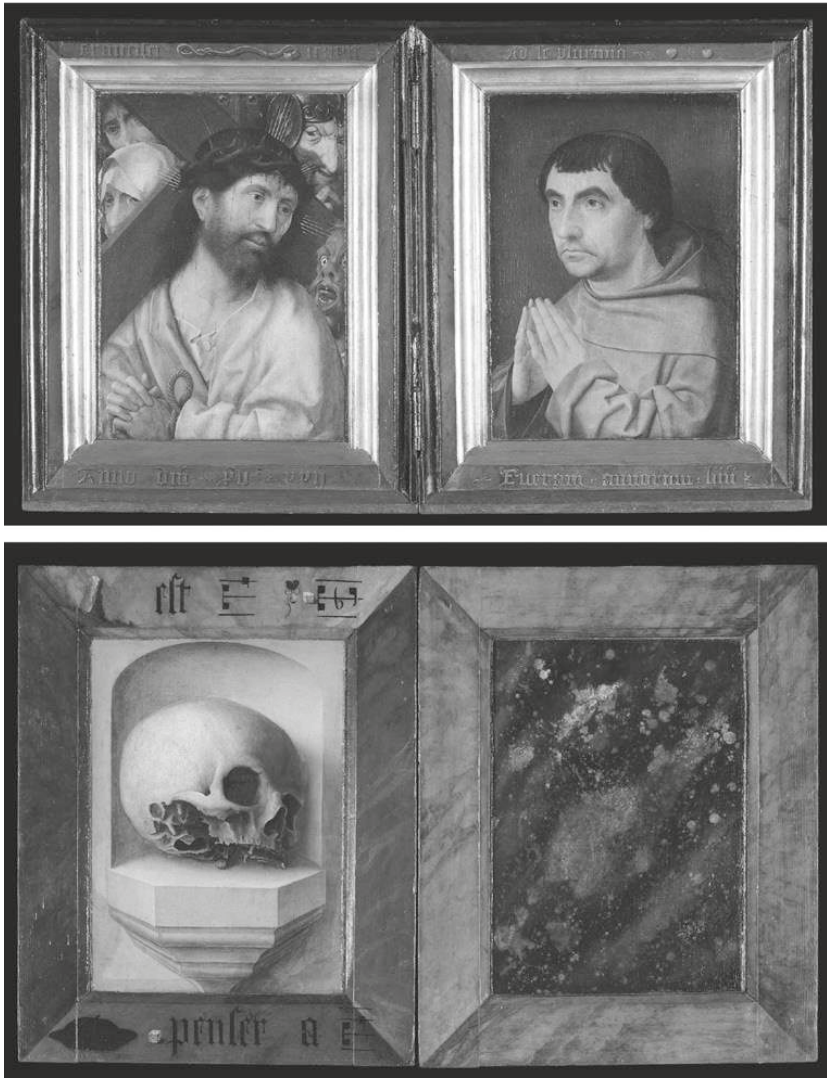


Fig. 285: Jan Provoost, *Diptych with Christ Carrying the Cross and the Portrait of a Franciscan Friar*, 1522, Bruges, Groeningemuseum

III.2.2. Polyptychs – staging the interior and exterior, and manipulating the direction of the figures' gazes

To the category of moveable objects, or objects that could be animated or that were frequently mobile and ready to be moved we must also add triptychs and polyptychs.¹⁸⁰ The principle of opening the wings was based on

180 **Sculptural and carved and painted folded altarpieces:** W. Paatz, *Süddeutsche Schnitzaltäre. Spätgotik in Süddeutschland, Österreich und Südtirol*, Munich 1963; W. Grundmann, *Die Sprache des Altars. Zur Glaubensaussage im deutschen Flügel- und Schreinaltar*, Berlin 1966; H. Schindler, *Der Schnitzaltar....*; P. Skubiszewski, “Le retable gothique sculpté. Entre le dogme et l’univers humain,” in: *Le retable d’Issenheim et la sculpture au nord des Alpes à la fin du Moyen Âge*, (colloquium: Colmar 1987), ed. Ch. Heck, Colmar 1989; C. Schleif, *Donatio et Memoria...; Flügelaltäre des späten Mittelalters*, (colloquium: Münsterstadt 1990), eds. H. Krohm, E. Oellermann, Berlin 1992; R. Kahsnitz, *Die großen Schnitzaltäre. Spätgotik in Süddeutschland, Österreich, Südtirol*, Munich 2005 (English edition: *Carved Splendor: The Late Gothic Altarpieces in Southern Germany, Austria and South Tirol*, London 2006); S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter: *Carved Retables*, pp. 90–92, and *Winged Altarpieces*, pp. 238–246. **Painted winged altarpieces:** D. Norman, “Making Renaissance Altarpieces,” chapter 5 in: *Making Renaissance Art*, (Renaissance Art Reconsidered 1), ed. K.W. Woods, New Haven–London 2007, pp. 175–208; A. Laabs, “Das Retabel als ‘Schaufenster’ zum göttlichen Hefig. Ein Beitrag zur Stellung des Flügelretabels im sakralen Zeremoniell des Kirchenjahres,” in: *Kunst als ästhetisches Ereignis, (Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft 24)*, Marburg 1997, pp. 71–86; R. Krischel (mit einem Beitrag von T. Nagel), “Mediensynthesen in der spätmittelalterlichen Sakralkunst. Das Altarbild als Kulisse für liturgische Gegenstände und Handlungen,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 69, 2008, pp. 73–168. **Painted Netherlandish Retables:** S.N. Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptych: A Study on Patronage*, Berkeley 1969; A.M. Neuner, *Das Triptychon in der frühen altniederländischen Malerei – Bildsprache und Aussagekraft einer Kompositionsform*, Frankfurt a.M. 1995; A.S. Steinmetz, *Das Altarretabel in der altniederländischen Malerei. Untersuchungen zur Darstellung einer sakralen Requisits vom frühen 15. bis zum späten 16. Jahrhundert*, Weimar 1995; K. Schade, *Ad Excitandum devotionis affectum. Kleine Triptychen in der altniederländischen Malerei*, Weimar 2001; D. Eichberger, “The Winged Altarpiece in Early Netherlandish Art,” in: *Making Medieval Art*, ed. Ph. Lindley, Donington 2003, pp. 152–172; S. Kemperdick, “I tableau à II hysseoirs – ein Bild mit zwei Flügeln. Wandelbare und nicht wandelbare Bildensambles in der Zeit Rogier van der Weydens,” in: S. Kemperdick, J. Sander et al., *Der Meister von Flémalle und Rogier van der Weyden* [36], pp. 117–131; L.F. Jacobs, *Opening Doors: The Early Netherlandish Triptych Reinterpreted. Painted German Retables – types and compositions:* R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, vol. 2, chapter *Retabel und ihre Bildanordnung*, pp. 437–452.

a hierarchy of gradual effects. Firstly, the effect of plasticity, secondly – of the preciousness of the material, thirdly – the scale, fourthly – the level of the narrative. At the same time, there were various modes of opening and revealing the content of the central corpus of the altarpiece.

The most common were triptychs and polyptychs with painted wings and carved chests, or also with painted central panels. On the outside large-scale figures appeared most frequently, to ensure their legibility from a distance. This was the formula used in the Silesian *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* by the Master of the Altarpiece of St. Barbara, now identified as Wilhelm of Aachen (Wilhelm von Oche, von Aachen) dated 1447 (its central panel is now in National Museum in Warsaw) [figs. 286–290].¹⁸¹

181 *Altarpiece of St. Barbara from Wrocław*: A. Ziemba in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 261 (with further bibliography). See also A.S. Labuda, “Das Zeugnis der künstlerischen Form - das Zeugnis der Schrift Auf den Spuren des Schöpfer des Breslauer St.-Barbara-Altars und des ehemaligen Hochaltars der Jakobskirche in Neisse,” in: *Vom Weichen über den Schönen Stil zur Ars Nova*, ed. by J. Fajt, M. Hörsch, Vienna - Cologne - Weimar 2018, pp. 267–298; A. Patała, *Pod znakiem świętego Sebalda. Rola Norymbergi w kształtowaniu późnogotyckiego malarstwa tablicowego na Śląsku*, Wrocław 2018; A. Patała et al., *Migracje. Sztuka późnogotycka na Śląsku*, exh. cat., Muzeum Narodowe we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2018; A. Patała, “Obcy i nieuchwytni. Aktywność pracowni Wilhelma Kalteysena von Oche, Mistrza Lat 1486–1487 i Mistrza Poliptyku z Gościszowic,” in: A. Patała et al., *Migracje. Sztuka późnogotycka na Śląsku*, exh. cat., Muzeum Narodowe we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2018.



Fig. 286: Master of the Altarpiece of St. Barbara (Wilhelm von Oche, Wilhelm Kalteysen von Aachen?), *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* from the church of St. Barbara in Breslau/Wrocław, 1447, central panel, Warsaw, National Museum

Commissioned for St. Barbara's Church in Wrocław, it was a thoroughly painted pentaptych – a retable with two pairs of wings, folded one onto another. The external wings, when the altarpiece was closed, showed the monumental figures of Christ-God and the Virgin in the scene of her Coronation (The Glory of the Virgin). The large planes of the white cloaks of the two figures dominated the scene and highlighted them even from a considerable distance. When the first pair of wings was open the viewer saw the Christological cycle with narrative scenes from the Passion in small sections of the wings (four on each) and with two large panels in the middle, with the Crucifixion and the Descent from the Cross, treated both as narrative scenes and as cultic, hieratic images. Finally, with the wings fully open the retable, the wings and lateral sections of the central panel showed the narrative from the life of St. Barbara, whilst the large central panel depicted monumental figures of the patron saints of the church: Barbara, Felix and Adauctus, presented in saturated colours, standing against a golden background under the pseudo-baldachin with its tracery. The visual system was based on a

shift from large-scale figures, painted in muted colours, of a devotional character, through the narrative scenes, in a smaller format, to majestic figures, this time painted using a vivid palette.



Fig. 287: *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* – arrangement of the panels in consecutive openings



Fig. 288: *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* – closed, photo taken before 1939



Fig. 289: *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* – first opening, photo taken before 1939



Fig. 290: *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* – full opening, photo taken before 1939



Fig. 291: Hermen Rode and his workshop, *Altarpiece of St. Luke* from the church of St. Catherine in Lübeck, 1484, Lübeck, St. Annen-Museum

Similarly, in principle, although with a richer effect of plasticity, was the opening of the winged *Altarpiece of St. Luke* from Lübeck (Sankt Annen-Museum) of 1484, created by the painter Herman Rode and a sculptor from his workshop for the local church of St. Catherine [fig. 291].¹⁸² The work by Rode shows three states in two openings. Firstly, we see the painted figures

182 **Hermen Rode and the Altar of St. Luke from Lübeck:** B. Heise, H. Vogeler, *Die Altäre des St. Annenmuseums*, Lübeck 1993, pp. 74–78; A. Rasche, “Werke des Lübecker Malers Hermen Rode im Ostseeraum,” in: *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, ed. by H. Nagossek, D. Popp, Marburg,

of saints, full-figured, depicted in a landscape and occupying the entire height of the wings. Secondly, following the first opening, we see the eight scenes on the reverses of the external wings and the fronts of the internal wings (two sections, assembled vertically, on each wing). This forms a large, multicolour space of almost rectangular sections, each with a narrative from the life of the saint apostle and bishop, partially intertwined with the life of Christ. In this opening, we see some gold, though used very sparingly: only in the frames and in small parts of the background. The second opening reveals the most splendid part, or at least treated as such at the time: three-dimensional, carved and full of rich gilding. They are polychromed, using restricted palette: bodily colours and dresses, with draperies painted in red and blue – at that time the most expensive pigments. In its final state, the viewer sees four iconic figures: in the middle the Virgin and Child, and St. Luke painting them, though in fact he is enthroned; on the sides, on the wings, there are standing figures of St. Catherine and St. Barbara.



Fig. 292: Michael Pacher, *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin*, 1471–1481, church in Sankt Wolfgang – closed polyptych

2001, pp. 126 ff; U. Albrecht, J. Rosenfeld, Ch. Saumweber, *Corpus der mittelalterlichen Holzskulptur und Tafelmalerei in Schleswig-Holstein*, vol. 1, Kiel 2005, no. 83; A. Rasche, *Studien zu Hermen Rode*, Petersberg 2013.



Fig. 293: Michael Pacher, *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin* in Sankt Wolfgang – first opening of the wings (external)

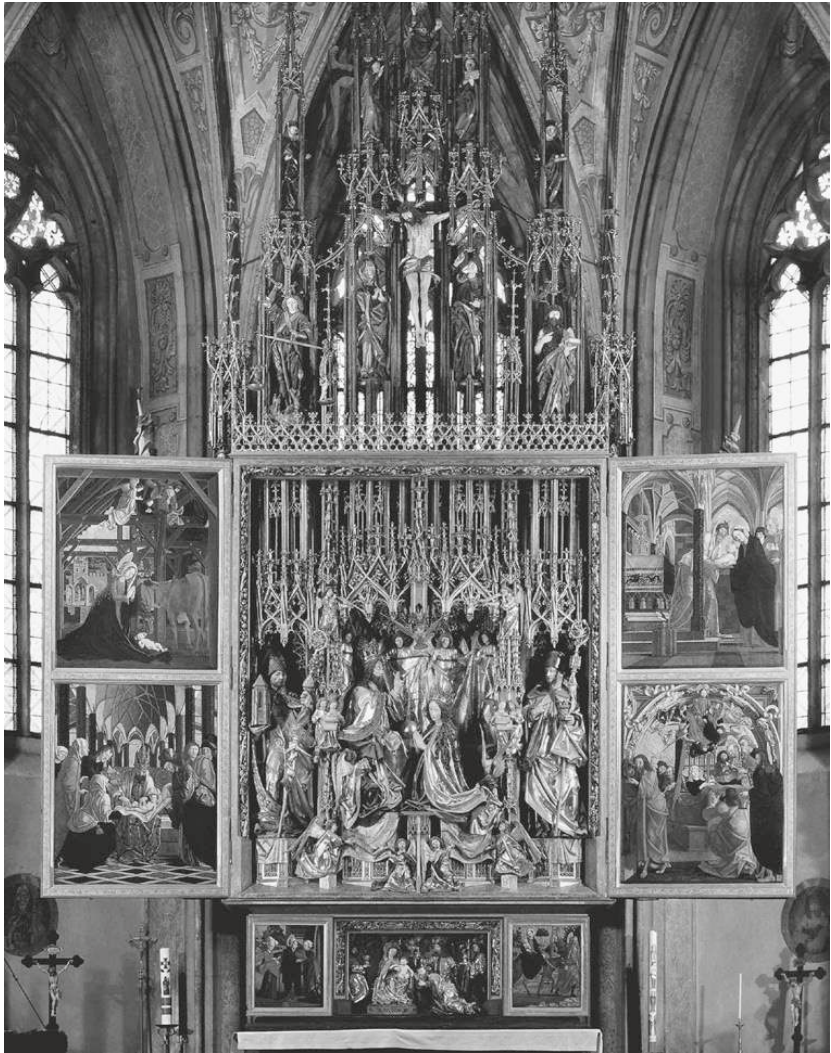


Fig. 294: Michael Pacher, *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin* in Sankt Wolfgang – second opening of the wings (internal)

The *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin* by Michael Pacher in Sankt Wolfgang (1471–1481) [figs. 292–294]¹⁸³ – also a pentaptych – has a simpler system, though the rhetoric of the effect of unveiling is much stronger: initially one sees purely painterly views, and then the sculptural part. The closed retable is framed by carved and modelled motifs: on the sides the figures of guardian saints – knights in gilded armour, George and Florian. At the top a large crown with the group of the Crucifixion in its tracery, rhythmically decorated with vertical divisions, springs up towards the vault. On the external sides of the wings, in four sections, the painter depicted a narrative from the life of St. Wolfgang (the saint's sermon being interrupted by the Devil; Wolfgang building the church by the Wolfgangsee with his own hands; Wolfgang giving grain to the poor; Wolfgang healing a possessed woman). This part is flat, though it is painted, creating an illusionistic sense of depth. The frame suggests that there is something more three-dimensional hidden behind the painted surface. However, the first opening does not corroborate that. We see a large wall with many panels, formed of sections of the reverses of the external and fronts of the internal wings. These panels narrate the story of the life of Christ during his time on Earth (His Baptism in the Jordan River, the Attempted Stoning, The Temptation, the Expulsion of the Merchants from the Temple, The Wedding at Cana, Christ and the Adulteress, The Feeding of the Multitudes, The Raising of Lazarus). Still everything has a flat, painterly surface. Only the second opening visually strikes the viewer. It reveals, between the painted side panels with the scenes from the life of the Virgin (the Nativity, the Circumcision, the Presentation to the Temple, the Death of the Virgin) a unique demonstration of sculptural richness and three-dimensionality – a scene, carved in the round, of the Coronation of the Virgin, adored by saints Wolfgang and Benedict. It is a composition that combines, through its profile view, narrative scenes with hieratic, iconic images, the latter highlighted by the enthroned representation of the Godhead and the frontally presented figures of assistant, patron saints.

183 Cf. note 53.

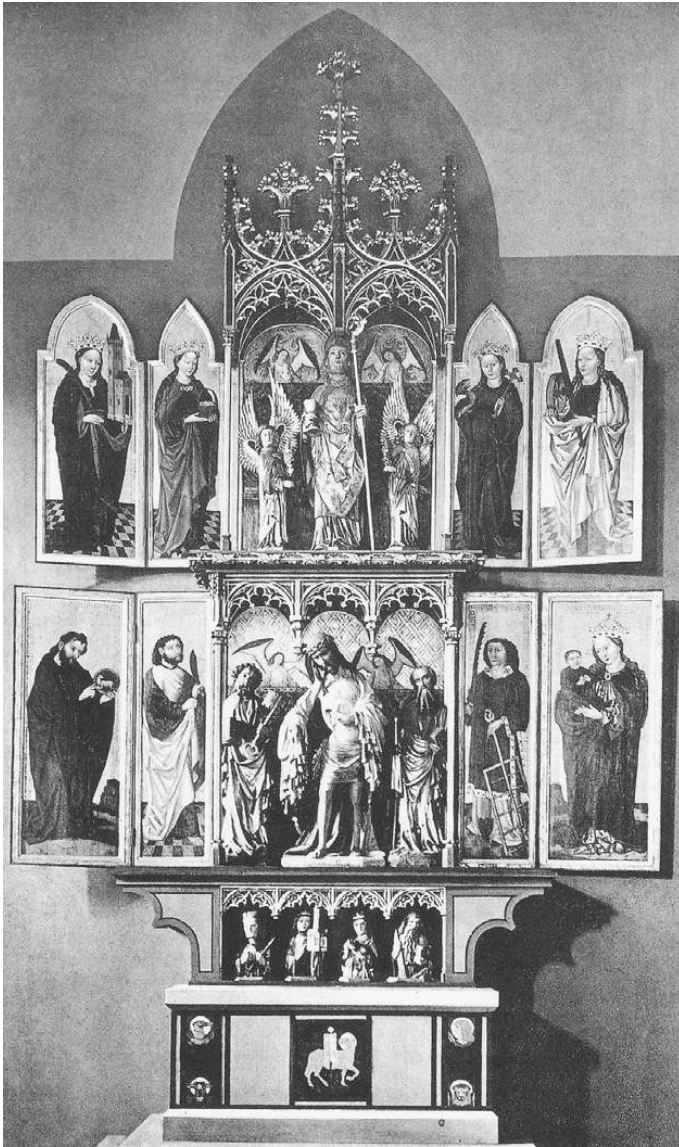


Fig. 295: Nikolaus Obilman?, *Altarpiece of the Goldsmiths' Guild* from the church of St. Mary Magdalene in Breslau/Wrocław, 1473 (the figure of the *Man of Sorrows* comes from an earlier sculptural group executed c. 1398–1400), sections preserved in the National Museum in Wrocław; photo taken before 1939

The *Altarpiece of the Goldsmiths' Guild* in Wrocław explores a different principle of viewing [fig. 295]. It was executed probably by Nikolaus Obilman for the church of St. Mary Magdalene in 1473, whilst the Man of Sorrows is an earlier sculptural group executed c. 1398–1400 (the fragments of the altarpiece are now in the National Museum in Wrocław).¹⁸⁴ The altarpiece consisted of two registers, the upper and the lower; all the paintings in the wings include single, standing figures. The scale of the figures and groups is consistent throughout the panels. However, the altarpiece preserved the hierarchy of modelling – from flat painting on the outside to three-dimensional figures concealed inside, and the work introduced the rule of transitions from natural tones to the golden background. Therefore, the figures in the reverses, that is on the outside, were shown against a colourful background of a brocade fabric, whilst the frontal part, visible when the wings were open, showed figures against shining, golden surfaces. The lustre of the open retable was highlighted by the gilding of the draperies of the carved figures, standing in the internal parts of the chest, on both levels of the altarpiece, and by the gilding of the tracery that decorated the baldachins of the two registers. The wings of the two levels could be folded and unfolded independently, one after another, so that the figures of angels and specific saints could accompany either the statue of St. Luke from the upper section of the altarpiece or the group of *Vir dolorum* with the figures of Sts. Peter and Paul from the lower chest. The opening of the upper section, with the lower part enclosed, was suitable for the viewing of the altarpiece on working days, with saints and angels surrounding the patron saint of the guild. However, the iconic, Christological and Eucharistic dimension of the scheme became manifest only after the opening of the wings of the lower section.

At times altarpieces introduced a gradation of effects: painting – polychromed, low reliefs – sculptures in the round. The viewings orchestrated in such a way characterise the retable of the high altar in the church of Blaubeuren Abbey in Swabia, created by Michael and Gregor Erhart (sculptures and reliefs), Bartholomäus Zeitblom and Bernhard Strigel (paintings) dated to 1493–1494 [figs. 296–298].¹⁸⁵ Flatly designed, painterly scenes are

184 *Altarpiece of the Goldsmiths' Guild* in Wrocław: B. Guldan Klamecka in: B. Guldan Klamecka, A. Ziomecka, *Sztuka na Śląsku XII–XVI w.*, collection catalogue, Muzeum Narodowe we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2003, no. 60. For the hypothetical attribution to Nicolaus Obilman, see: J. Witkowski, *Gotycki ołtarz główny kościoła Świętych Piotra i Pawła w Legnicy*, Legnica 1997, pp. 58–61 and passim.

185 Michael and Gregor Erhart, *Altarpiece in Blaubeuren* (painted panels: Bartholomäus Zeitblom): A. Broschek, *Michel Erhart. Ein Beitrag zur schwäbischen Plastik der*

included in the panels of the closed retable, in the first view creating an illusion of greater depth, whilst the second opening reveals gilded and polychromed reliefs on the wings, and in the main chest frontal, hieratic figures carved in the round.

Spätgotik, Berlin 1973; M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer...*, pp. 333–334; S. Braun-Miller, J. Klein, B. Wotke, *500 Jahre Hochaltar Blaubeuren*, 2nd edition, Wannweil 1993; *Michel Erhart und Jörg Syrlin d. Ä. Spätgotik in Ulm*, ed. by B. Reinhardt, S. Roller, exh. cat., Museum der Stadt Ulm, Stuttgart 2002; A. Moraht-Fromm, W. Schürle et al., *Kloster Blaubeuren: der Chor und sein Hochaltar*, Stuttgart 2002; R. Kahsnitz, *Carved Splendor. Late Gothic Altarpieces in Southern Germany, Austria, and South Tirol*, London 2006, pp. 57–68 (original edition: *Die großen Schnitzaltäre: Spätgotik in Süddeutschland, Österreich, Südtirol*, Munich–Zurich 2005), pp. 180–188 and pasim.



Fig. 296: Bartholomäus Zeitblom, *The Blaubeuren Altarpiece* – retablo of the main altar in the church of the Blaubeuren Abbey, 1493–1494, view of the closed polyptych

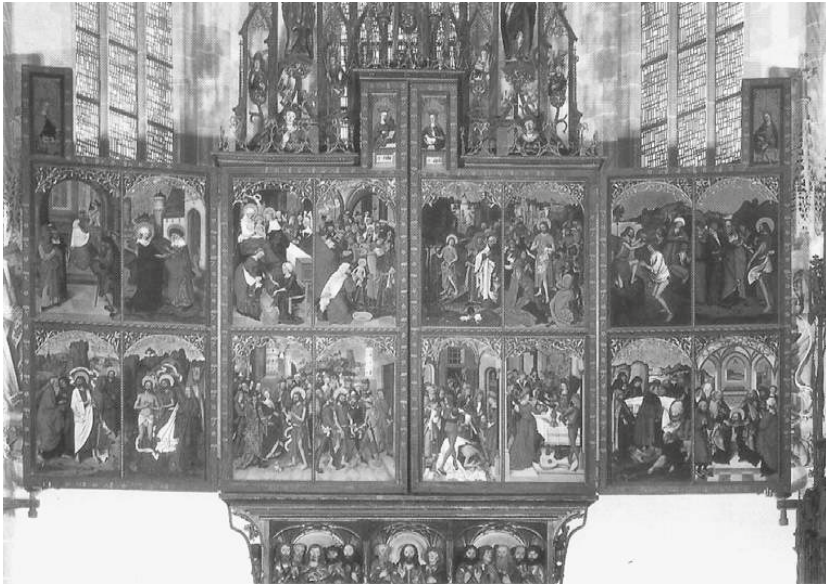


Fig. 297: Bartholomäus Zeitblom and Bernhard Strigel, *The Blaubeuren Altarpiece* – the first opening



Fig. 298: Michel and Gregor Erhart (sculptures and reliefs), Bartholomäus Zeitblom (paintings), *The Blaubeuren Altarpiece* – fully open

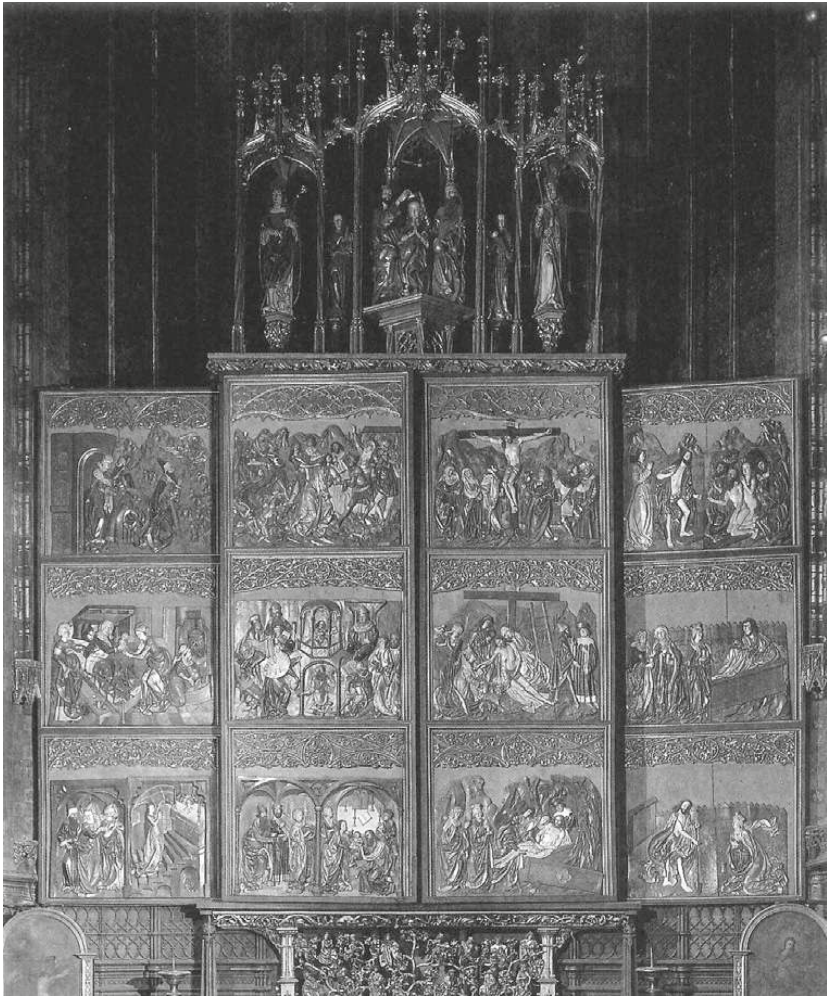


Fig. 299: Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece*, 1477–1489, Cracow, Our Lady Church – closed altarpiece



Fig. 300: Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece* – open



Fig. 301: Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece* – crowning

In many pentaptychs, including the *Marian Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss (1477–1489, Cracow, Church of Our Lady) [figs. 299–301],¹⁸⁶ the back wings remained immovable. These and the internal wings are covered with low reliefs in the retable in Cracow, and are polychromed to imitate paintings. There is only a single opening of the internal wings, which cover the external. All are divided into six sections, which is unusual since wings were

186 *Marian Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss in Cracow: Sz. Dettloff, “Zagadnienia twórcze Ołtarza Mariackiego Wita Stosza,” *Rocznik Historii Sztuki*, I, 1956, pp. 99–236; M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Schnitzer...*, 4th edition, Munich 2004, pp. 342–343; P. Skubiszewski, “Der Osterzyklus im Marienaltar des Veit Stoß,” in: *Veit Stoss. Die Vorträge des Nürnberger Symposions*, ed. by R. Kahsnitz, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg – Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte Munich, Munich 1985, pp. 123–140; V. Funk, *Veit Stoß. Der Krakauer Marienaltar*, Freiburg 1985; *Wit Stwoszcz w Krakowie*, ed. by L. Kalinowski, F. Stolot, Cracow 1987; M. Stuhr, *Der Krakauer Marienaltar von Veit Stoss*, Leipzig 1992; A. Dietl, “Himmelfahrt der Maria. Der Krakauer Marienaltar und seine Geschichte,” in: *Wit Stwoszcz – Veit Stoß. Ein Künstler in Krakau und Nürnberg*, ed. by Ch. Hölz, Munich 2000; M. Mojzer, “Der historische Meister MS sive Marten Swarcz seu Martinus Niger alias Marcin Czarny, der Maler des Krakauer Hochaltars von Veit Stoß: II.Teil. Krakau und Nürnberg im Jahr 1477 und davor,” *Annales de la Galerie Nationale Hongroise*, 2005/07(2008), pp. 90–141; *Biblia z lipowego drewna. Karty z dziejów Ołtarza Mariackiego*, (conference Cracow 2007), ed. by S. Waltoś, Cracow 2009; B. Dümpelmann, “Das ‘Flügelretabel als Bildmaschine. Techniken der Wahrnehmungssteuerung im Krakauer Marienaltar,’” in: *Techniken des Bildes*, ed. by M. Schulz, B. Wyss, Munich 2010, pp. 219–241; G. Jurkowlaniec, “Ołtarz Mariacki Wita Twosza. Tradycja–innovacja–recepja / St. Mary’s Altar by Veit Stoss: Tradition – innovation – reception,” in: *Blask. Ołtarz Mariacki Wita Stwosza / Shine: St. Mary’s Altar by Veit Stoss*, contributions by P. Skubiszewski et al., ed. by A. Nowakowski, Cracow 2011, pp. 47–74; B. Dümpelmann, *Veit Stoß und das Krakauer Marienretabel. Mediale Zugänge, mediale Perspektiven*, Zurich 2012; her, “Veit Stoss und das Krakauer Marienretabel. Über die Möglichkeiten des Medialen Zugangs zum Schnitzretabel,” in: *Kanon Kunstgeschichte: Einführung in Werke, Methoden und Epochen*, ed. by K. Marek, M. Schulz, vol. 2: *Neuzeit*, Paderborn 2015, pp. 127–147. See also P. Skubiszewski, “Der Stil des Veit Stoß,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 41, 1978, pp. 93–133; *Veit Stoß in Nürnberg. Werke des Meister und seiner Schule in Nürnberg und Umgebung*, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg, Munich 1983; P. Skubiszewski, *Veit Stoss und Polen*, (lecture at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, 1983), special issue, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 1983; R. Kahsnitz, “Veit Stoss in Nürnberg,” *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* 1984, pp. 39–70; Ch. Mechat, *Veit Stoß. Ein deutscher Künstler zwischen Nürnberg und Krakau*, Bonn 1984; P. Skubiszewski, *Veit Stoss*, Warsaw 1985; *Veit Stoss. Die Vorträge des Nürnberger Symposions*, ed. by R. Kahsnitz, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

typically formed of two or four sections. When the altarpiece is closed, it shows an elaborate Easter cycle – a series of Christological scenes, and following its opening the viewer sees the cycle of the Glory of the Virgin, with its climax in the carved scenes in the chest and in the crown: The Dormition of the Virgin, The Assumption and Coronation. The background, inside and surfaces of the twelve external reliefs are dominated not by gold, but by blue, which gives the effect of the figures being cut out and placed in a single, unified space; at the same time this colour highlights and brings out the gilding of the figures. The altarpiece in Cracow is very instructive about the mode of opening of the retable, and about the way in which one saw the inside of the chest – modelled and illuminated by the radiant tones of its gilding. In Cracow, unlike in the rest of Europe, the tradition of opening and closing the altarpiece (not only during festivities but daily) [fig. 302] has survived down to the present day.

Nuremberg – Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte Munich, Munich 1985 (with full bibliography on pp. 297–338); *Wit Stwosz. Studia o sztuce i recepcji*, ed. by A.S. Labuda, Warsaw–Poznań 1986; *Wit Stwosz w Krakowie*, ed. by L. Kalinowski, F. Stolot, Cracow 1987; *Folia Historiae Atrium XXV*, 1989 (special issue dedicated to Stoss); G. Sello, *Veit Stoss*, Munich 1989; M. Kodyńska-Kosińska, *Stwosz. Lata krakowskie (1477–1496)*, Warsaw 1998; *Wokół Wita Stwosza*, ed. by D. Horzela, A. Organisty, exh. cat., Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Cracow 2004; *Wokół Wita Stwosza*, (conference: Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie 2005), Cracow 2006 (with contributions by P. Skubiszewski, *Wit Stwosz i sztuka XV wieku*, pp. 10–27; H. Krohm, *Veit Stoss und Straßburg – eine Hauptfrage neu betrachtet*, pp. 28–41; A. Saliger, *Quellen zum Stil des Veit Stoss in Wien*, pp. 42–51; U. Heinrichs-Schreiber, *Veit Stoss and the question of style within the scope of fifteenth century education. Remarks on Stoss' understanding of gesture*, pp. 62–77).



Fig. 302: Procedure of the opening of the *St. Mary's Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss – contemporary photo

The carved retablo meant that the altarpiece was massive and heavy, and the wings filled with wooden figures were difficult to move. The gradation of effects of modelling served primarily to evenly distribute the significant weight of the altarpiece; aesthetic concerns were subordinate to this important factor. The reliefs, and the painted surfaces, allowed the moveable

arms to be thinner and lighter, hence the growing popularity of these technical formulae in the late fifteenth century. In altarpieces that were exclusively painted, and particularly in those popular in the Netherlands, the Upper Rhine, as well as in Franconia, Bavaria and Austria, from the second quarter of the century, the sculptures were merely illusionistically simulated through the *en grisaille* paintings, which allowed artists to imitate stone figures and sculpted groups with great precision. Subsequently, the typical location of the sculptures was subverted: the real figures from the central chest and internal wings were transferred onto the external part of the retable, onto the reverse sides of the wings – that is, to the front of the closed altarpiece, transformed from a three-dimensional decoration into a painterly imitation.

This process was developed widely in Netherlandish painting, as can be seen in: *The Ghent Altarpiece*; the wings of the *Dresden Triptych*; the diptych with the *Annunciation* by Jan van Eyck, now in the Thyssen Museum; the *Holy Trinity* by the Master of Flémalle, now in Frankfurt; the *Altarpiece of the Last Judgment from Beaune* by Rogier van der Weyden; the *Triptych of the Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus* by Dirk Bouts; the *Altarpiece of the Three Magi* in Munich (the so-called *Pearl of Brabant*) by his workshop; the *Portinari Altarpiece* by Hugo van der Goes [fig. 303]; the triptych of the *Last Judgment* from Danzig; the *Altarpiece of the Morel Family* by Hans Memling in Bruges; the *Altarpiece of St. Ursula* by the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula (Bruges, Groeningemuseum), and the triptych of *The Virgin with St. Catherine and St. Barbara* by the Master of the Holy Blood (also in the Groeningemuseum). These examples are the most notable from over one hundred and seventy such altarpieces (catalogued by Constanza Itzel in 2005).¹⁸⁷ This trend was motivated by various factors: the aforementioned technical and material considerations; the rivalry between painters and sculptors; the aspirations of the patricians to adopt the well-established courtly taste for *en grisaille* painting, perceived as particularly sophisticated and refined; as a defence against iconoclastic charges about material images by highlighting that the image in the altarpiece is merely an imitation of the spiritual image.¹⁸⁸ The *en grisaille* imitations of sculpture were also explored in German painting,

187 C. Itzel, *Der Stein trägt. Die Imitation von Skulpturen in der niederländischen Tafelmalerei im Kontext bildtheoretischer Auseinandersetzungen des frühen 15. Jahrhunderts*, dissertation, University Heidelberg 2005, note 370 (online: <http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/archiv/5740>).

188 A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów I*, chapter XI.1, pp. 375–390. On *grisaille* as the courtly and royal-ducal aesthetic – see T.-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck. Grisallas*, passim.

though they were significantly less popular there than in the Netherlands. The notable examples from Germany are two altarpieces – one of St. Thomas and the Crucifixion – by the Master of the Altarpiece of St. Bartholomew from the Upper Rhine (both c. 1498 and c. 1500 Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum),¹⁸⁹ and the panels by Matthias Grünewald from the *Altarpiece of Jakob Heller* for the Dominican church in Frankfurt (c. 1509–1510, now in Frankfurt, Städel Museum and Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle) [fig. 304], depicting Saints Lawrence and Cyriac, and St. Elizabeth and probably St. Lucy.¹⁹⁰ In the latter panels, the imitation of sculpture is substituted by a loose, painterly interpretation of the *en grisaille* depictions, imitating a chiaroscuro drawing or a print rather than a sculpture. This was in fact a constant tendency in this genre of panel painting.

189 *Altarpieces of St. Thomas and of the Crucifixion by the Master of the Altarpiece of St. Bartholomew*: F.G. Zehnder, *Altkölner Malerei*, (Kataloge des Wallraf-Richartz-Museums XI), Cologne 1990, pp. 422–447; R. Budde, R. Krischel, *Genie ohne Namen. der Meister des Bartholomäus-Altars*, exh. cat., Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne 2001, pp. 376–377 and passim.

190 *Saints Lawrence and Cyriac, and St. Elisabeth and probably St. Lucy – panels from the Altarpiece of Jakob Heller by Matthias Grünewald*: M. Krieger, “Grünewald und die Kunst der Grisaille,” in: *Grünewald und seine Zeit*, eds. J. Mack-Andrick, A. Reuter, exh. cat., Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe 2007, pp. 58–67.



Fig. 303: Hugo van der Goes, *Portinari Altarpiece*, c. 1473–1480, Florence, Gallerie degli Uffizi – reverses of the wings (closed altarpiece)



Fig. 304: Matthias Grünewald, *St. Lawrence and St. Cyriac; St. Elizabeth and St. Lucy(?)* – panels of the *Altarpiece of Jakob Heller* from the Dominican Church in Frankfurt, c. 1509–1510, Frankfurt, Städel Museum, and Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle

The opening of the moveable wings, closed during working days, was destined to reveal the true subject of veneration, as the festive view was available only on Sundays and feast days.¹⁹¹ Keeping the altarpiece closed for the majority of the year ensured the protection of the precious inside of the chest from dust, the fumes of the burning candles, direct sunlight or mechanical damage, whilst also playing a liturgical role.

The *Glossa Ordinaria (ordinarium)* from the Cathedral in Laon dated to around the end of the twelfth century orders that the high altar needs to be open on Sundays during Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Maundy Thursday (*Quadragesima*), with the exclusion of the Feast of the Annunciation, on 25th March, if this day falls during that time. Similarly, subsequent sacristy books from the churches in Delft (Oude Kerk), Nuremberg, Lübeck, Tegernsee and Freising describe opening their retables during those days. We know that the *Altarpiece of the Last Judgment* from Beaune by Rogier van der Weyden had to be presented at that time with the wings fully open, since the altar cloth for that occasion was decorated with the scene of the Annunciation, which was depicted on the closed wings of the retable; it is dubious that two scenes of the Annunciation would have been visible at the same time!

191 **Opening and closing of the winged altarpieces on working days and feasts, concealing of retables, figures and paintings:** S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter *Winged altarpieces: Revelation and concealment*, pp. 238–246, in particular pp. 239–242; B. Reudenbach, “Wandlung als symbolische Form. Liturgische Bezüge im Flügelretabel der St. Jacobi-Kirche in Göttingen,” in: *Das Hochaltarretabel der St. Jacobi-Kirche in Göttingen*, pp. 249–272; S. Wegmann, *Auf dem Weg zum Himmel. Das Fegefeuer in der deutschen Kunst des Mittelalters*, Cologne–Weimar 2003, chapter 5.1. *Altarretabel*, pp. 174–182; L.F. Jacobs, *Opening Doors...*, chapter *Introduction: Openings and Closings of the Doors*, pp. 8–10. See also; H. Keller, “Der Flügelaltar als Reliquienschrein,” in: *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Plastik, Festschrift für Theodor Müller*, Munich 1965, pp. 125–144; D.L. Ehresmann, “Some Observations on the Role of Liturgy in the Early Winged Altarpieces,” *The Art Bulletin* 64, 1982, pp. 359–369; N. Wolf, *Deutsche Schnitzretabel...*; C. Schleif, *Donatio et Memoria...*; P. Crossley, “The Man from the Inner Space: Architecture and Meditation in the Choir of St. Laurence in Nuremberg,” in: *Medieval Art: Recent perspectives (A Memorial Tribute to C.R. Dodwell)*, ed. by R.G. Owen-Crocker, Manchester – New York 1998, pp. 165–182; *Aus der Nähe betrachtet. Bilder am Hochaltar und ihre Funktionen im Mittelalter*, (colloquium Frankfurt a.M. 2015), ed. by J. Sander, Berlin – Munich 2016; *Schaufenster des Himmels. Der Altenberger Altar und seine Bildausstattung*, ed. by J. Sander, exh. cat. Städel Museum, Frankfurt a.M., Berlin – Munich 2016; *Klappeffekte. Faltbare Bildträger in der Vormoderne*, ed. by D. Ganz, M. Rimmele, Berlin 2016, (esp. H. Lutz, B. Siegert, *In der Mixed Zone Klapp- und faltbare Bildobjekte*



Fig. 305: Veit Stoss, *Bamberg Altarpiece* – altarpiece of the Carmelite Church in Nuremberg, 1520–1523, Bamberg Cathedral

Andreas Stoss, the son of the celebrated sculptor Veit Stoss, the prior of the Carmelite Monastery in Nuremberg, described in a preserved instruction the way in which his father’s work – the retable from the church of the same convent – should be viewed [fig. 305]. “The altarpiece should be opened

als Operatoren hybrider Realitäten, pp. 109–138); K. Ulrieh-Eschemann, “Der Engelsgruss zwischen Himmel und Erde im Gottesdienst,” in: *500 Jahre Engelsgruß in St. Lorenz Nürnberg*, Lindenberg i. Allgäu 2018, pp. 95 ff; J. Tripps, “Unerwartete Wandlungen. Fallstudien zum Öffnen und Schließen von niederländischen Retabeln,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 79, 2018, pp. 21–42; J. Kroesen, “Retabel und Raum – Bedingungen und Formenvielfalt,” in: *Mittelalterliche Retabel in Hessen*, vol. 2: *Werke, Kontexte, Ensembles*, ed. by U. Schütte, H. Locher, K. Niehr, J. Sander, X. Stolzenburg, Petersberg 2019, pp. 8–23; K. Niehr, “Retabelgattungen – Retabelarten – Retabeltypen,” in: *Mittelalterliche Retabel in Hessen*, vol. 1: *Bildsprache, Bildgestalt, Bildgebrauch*, pp. 50–57; B. Welzel, “Zwischen den Bildern der Passion. Visualität und Dynamik,” in: *Religiöses Wissen im vormodernen Europa*, ed. by R. Dürr, Paderborn 2019, pp. 645–667; D.L. Sadler, “Orchestrating polyphony at the altar: Passion altarpieces in late medieval France,” in: *Quid est sacramentum?*, ed. by W.S. Melion, E. Carson Pastan, L. Palmer Wandel, Leiden – Boston 2020, pp. 261–291.

only during the Nativity of Christ; Easter; Pentecost and two subsequent days; the Feast of the Ascension; the Feast of the Holy Trinity; All Saints'; Epiphany; Corpus Christi; the Feast of the Consecration of the church [of this] monastery and all feasts of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. On each day of these feasts the altarpiece is to be closed soon after the second vesper. It must be cleaned twice a year. There must not be too strong illumination by the altar, because of the fumes; the two small candles by the wall will be sufficient, and others should be placed at a great distance from the altar."¹⁹² The overall good condition in which we find the internal panels of triptychs today seems to confirm that this mode of viewing these altarpieces was a common practice.

The opening of triptychs or polyptychs was strictly connected with the liturgical calendar.¹⁹³ However, it is surprising that Andreas Stoss did not recommend opening the Carmelite triptych on Sundays, but only on the specific main feasts. This could be motivated by the structure of the triptych: with only a single pair of wings. They could be opened either on Sundays and feast days, or just on feast days. In turn, triptychs with two openings had to be opened on Sunday, otherwise the second set of wings would have been redundant. It is a certainty that, on religious principle, all altarpieces were closed during the Paschal triduum and Easter, when all images, in particular sculptures such as crucifixes and figures of the Man of Sorrows, were covered with cloth. The altarpieces in the choir were concealed behind *Fastentücher*: huge cloths that were white or which only had light, monochromatic images showing the Crucified Christ and scenes from the Passion [fig. 306]. Surviving draperies from Austria, Switzerland and Germany confirm this practice.¹⁹⁴ The opening

192 M. Baxandall, *Limewood Sculptors...*, p. 4.

193 A. Laabs, "Das Retabel als 'Schaufenster' zum göttlichen Hefig. Ein Beitrag zur Stellung des Flügelretabels im sakralen Zeremoniell des Kirchenjahrs," in: *Kunst als ästhetisches Ereignis, (Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft 24)*, Marburg 1997, pp. 71–86. See also S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 238–241.

194 M. Teasdale Smith, "The Use of Grisaille as Lenten Observance," *Marsyas* 9, 1959, pp. 43–45; M. Ranacher, "Painted Lenten Veils and Wall Coverings in Austria: Technique and Conservation," in: *Conservation within Historic Buildings*, eds. N.S. Bromelie, G. Thomson, P. Smith, London 1980, pp. 142–148; U. Schiessl, S. Wülfert, R. Kühnen, "Technical Observations on the So-called 'Grosses Zittauer Fastentuch': A Lenten Veil Dating from 1472," in: *The Fabric of Images: European Paintings on Textile Supports in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth*

of the retable on days other than Sundays and feast days could be justified by the altarpiece's function – whether it was located on the high altar of the church, or a side altar, placed by a pillar, *tramezzo* or inside a chapel. An early sixteenth-century painting, depicting friars singing a hymn before the Virgin and Child, shows the inside of the Dominican church in Utrecht [fig. 307]. Undoubtedly, the moment is solemn and festive: *Salve Regina* was sung on the feast of the Virgin. The painting includes seven retables located in the church. The altarpiece on the high altar in the presbytery, together with five side altarpieces, are opened to reveal their carved and gilded insides. Two side retables remain closed. This proves that there were certain rules determining which altarpieces could be opened during the feast days.

Centuries, ed. by C. Villers, London 2000, pp. 98–100; *Krone und Schleier: Kunst aus mittelalterlichen Frauenklöstern*, exh. cat. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle Bonn – Ruhrland Museum Essen, Munich 2005 (in English.: J.E. Hamburger, S. Marti, C.W. Bynum et al., *Crown and Veil: The Art of Female Monasticism in the Middle Ages*, New York 2008), pp. 369–370.



Fig. 306: *Fastentuch* – Lenten veil, Cathedral in Freiburg im Breisgau



Fig. 307: Master from Utrecht?, *Dominican Friars Adoring the Virgin and Child in a Church*, c. 1520, Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent

The varying frequency for the opening of the altarpieces in different circumstances can also be discerned from the surviving sacristans' books (*Mesnerpflichtbücher*), preserved, for instance, in the Oude Kerk in Delft, in Freising Cathedral, in the churches in Lübeck and Tegernsee and in the main parish churches of St. Sebaldus and St. Lawrence in Nuremberg.¹⁹⁵ They describe when and how the altarpieces were covered with cloths; they also list the locations of lamps and candles and when they ought to be lit, as well as which altarpieces were meant to be open, and on which feasts. The book of the church of the Monastery of Dominican nuns (dedicated to St. Catherine) in Nuremberg records that in 1436 all altarpieces were to be open during the feasts of the Virgin and Christ, and during the Nativity of Christ, Easter and Pentecost they were to be kept open for three days. In the Monastery of St. Michael in Lübeck, where the Augustinian nuns lived, the retables were to be open on forty different festive days during the liturgical year, as described in the year 1463. However, the sacristans' books do not describe the obligatory practice of opening the triptychs or polyptych always and only for the duration of the mass. Andreas Stoss in his guidelines clearly specifies that the altarpiece remained open throughout the feast day, until late in the evening, and not only for the duration of the liturgy.

195 A. Gümbel, *Das Mesnerpflichtbuch von St. Lorenz in Nürnberg vom Jahre 1493*, Munich 1928; his, *Das Mesnerpflichtbuch von St. Sebald vom Jahre 1482*, Munich 1929; G. Verhoeven, "Kerkelijke feestdagen in de late middeleeuwen. Utrechtse en Delftse kalenders," *Holland. Regionaal- en historisch tijdschrift* 25, 1993, pp. 156–173; W. Haas, "Die mittelalterliche Altaranordnung in der Nürnberger Lorenzkirche," in: *500 Jahre Hallenchor St. Lorenz zu Nürnberg 1477–1977*, ed. by H. Bauer, G. Hirschmann, G. Stolz, Nuremberg 1977, pp. 63–108; R. Kahsnitz, *Carved Altarpieces*, p. 16; C. Schleif, *Donatio et Memoria....*; P. Crossley, *The Man from Inner Space....*; G. Weilandt, "Alltag einer Küsterin. Die Ausstattung und liturgische Nutzung von Chor und Nonnenempore der Nürnberger Dominikanerinnenkirche nach dem unbekanntem 'Notel der Küsterin' (1436)," in: *Kunst und Liturgie. Choranlagen des Spätmittelalters – ihre Architektur, Ausstattung und Nutzung*, ed. by A. Moraht-Fromm, Ostfildern 2003, pp. 159–187, in particular pp. 166 ff; G. Weilandt, *Die Sebalduskirche in Nürnberg. Bild und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter der Gotik und Renaissance*, Petersberg 2007.



Fig. 308: Master of the Agilolf Altarpiece, *Mass of St. Agilolf*, c. 1520, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum



Fig. 309: Master of Mary of Burgundy, *Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, 1477, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857, fol. 14v – illumination showing *Margaret of York (or Mary of Burgundy) Reading a Prayer Book* and *The Virgin and Child in a Church Adored by Mary of Burgundy (or Margaret of York) and Maximilian of Austria*

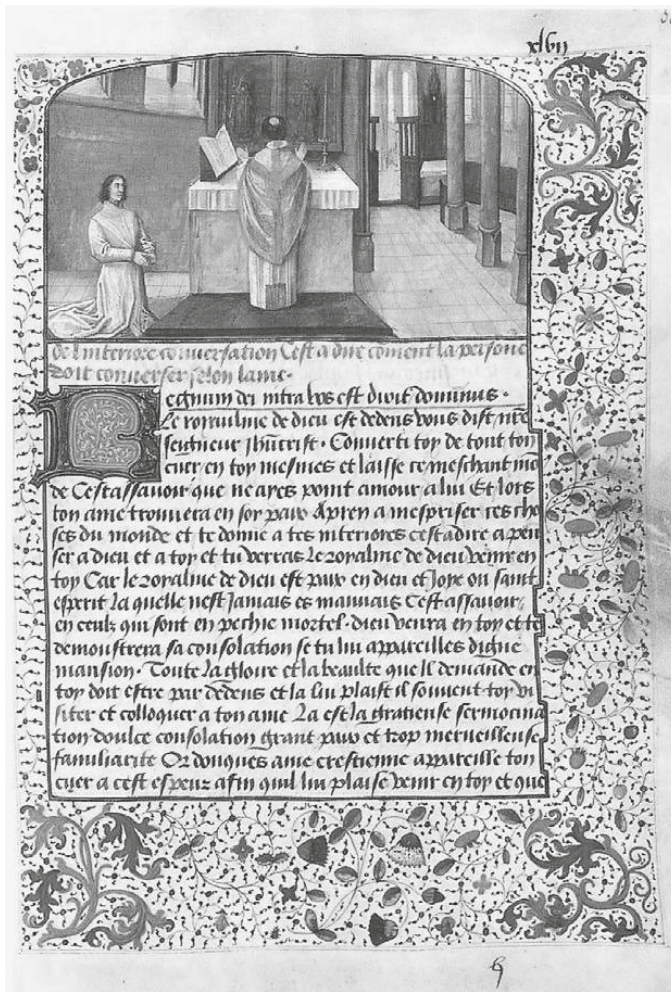


Fig. 310: *The Celebration of a Mass* – the illumination in the codex *Ascetische tractaten*, 1468–1477, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9272-76, fol. 55r



Fig. 311: Gerard Horenbout, *The Mass in the Honour of the Holy Trinity* and *The Mass in the Honour of the Virgin Mary* – miniatures in the *Rothschild Book of Hours*, c. 1510, Christie's New York, Sale 2819, 29.01.2014, previously in Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2844, fol. 16v and 75v – with closed triptychs in the lower parts of the altarpieces



Fig. 312: *The Distribution of Holy Communion* – illumination in the manuscript *Seelengärtlein – Hortulus Animae*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2706

In the common understanding two aspects, in fact distinct, were conflated: one, the tradition of opening the retable during feast days and closing it on working days; and two, the concept of conducting a mass with the retable open. The latter practice was by no means a rule. In fact, there are some images that show triptychs shut during the mass. These visual sources suggest that sometimes mass could be celebrated with the altarpiece closed. The painting *St. Agilolf Celebrating the Mass*, now in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne, by the Antwerp Master of the Altarpiece of St. Agilolf, working c. 1520 for the Cathedral in Cologne, shows a triptych on an altar with its wings folded [fig. 308]. The moment of liturgical glory is depicted in a celebrated illumination from the *Book of Hours of Mary of Burgundy* (1477, Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857, fol. 14v) – *The Virgin and Child inside a Church* [fig. 309]. Here, the members of the

House of Burgundy and of Burgundian-Habsburg (Margaret of York or Mary of Burgundy, and Maximilian of Austria) assisted by the courtly procession, adore the Virgin and Christ, enthroned before the altar.¹⁹⁶ Behind them there is a large, winged altarpiece – and it is clearly closed. The manuscript illuminations include other depictions of this practice. In the miniature from codex *Ascetische tractaten* (1468–1477, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9272–76, fol. 55r) [fig. 310], we see a private mass being conducted for the depicted patron, with the winged retable clearly shut.¹⁹⁷ The miniatures by Gerard Horenbout in the *Rothschild Book of Hours* (c. 1510, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2844, fol. 16v and 75v) – *The Mass in the Honour of the Holy Trinity* and *The Mass in the Honour of the Virgin Mary* – show the important stages of the liturgy: the celebrant giving the host to the assisting priest during communion, and the passing of the pax for the priest to kiss it, both scenes taking place before closed triptychs [fig. 311].¹⁹⁸ Even though the situation is not clearly legible, it seems that the scene of the *Distribution of Holy Communion* in the illumination in the manuscript *Seelengärtlein – Hortulus Animae* (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2706) [fig. 312] occurs in front of the folded altarpiece, with only one wing visible.¹⁹⁹

196 Cf. A. Hagopian van Buren, “A window on two duchesses of Burgundy,” in: *Studies in Painting and Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages and Northern Renaissance: Tributes in honor of James H. Marrow*, ed. by J.F. Hamburger, A.S. Korteweg, Turnhout 2006, pp. 505–520. *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy in Vienna*: O. Pächt, D. Thoss, *Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabel der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Flämische Schule II*, Vienna 1990, vol. I, pp. 85–103, vol. II, pp. 69–85, pl. X, figs. 102–150; E. Inglis, *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy: Codex Vindobonensis 1857*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, London 1995; B. Rothstein, “The rule of metaphor and the play of the viewer in the ‘Hours of Mary of Burgundy,’” in: *Image and imagination of the religious self in late medieval and early modern Europe*, ed. by Reindert Falkenburg, Walter S. Melion et al., Turnhout 2007, pp. 237–275; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów*, vol. I, pp. 271–274.

197 *Vlaamse Miniaturen 1404–1482*, p. 424.

198 Th. Richter, *Paxtafeln und Pacificalia. Studien zu Form, Ikonographie und liturgischem Gebrauch*, Weimar 2003; M. Krieger, *Gerard Horenbout und der Meister Jakobs IV. von Schottland. Stilkritische Überlegungen zur flämischen Buchmalerei*, Vienna–Cologne–Weimar 2012, p. 261 (fig. 104) and p. 267 (fig. 107).

199 *Seelengärtlein, Hortulus Animae, Cod. Bibl. Pal. Vindob. 2706*, ed. by F. Dörnhofer, vol. 3, Frankfurt a.M. 1909, p. 731.

The panels from the *Altarpiece of St. Clare's Convent in Bamberg* by Hans Pleydenwurff and his workshop (c. 1460–1462, Bamberg, Staatsgalerie)²⁰⁰ illustrate a free or unencumbered approach to the opening or closing of the depicted triptychs or polyptychs. The scenes: St. Clare receives a branch of the Easter willow tree palm and St. Clare experiences a vision of the Holy Sacrament. The first one is a festive, even if not a strictly liturgical scene; the other is closely related to the sacrament. The altarpieces are widely open [fig. 313], whilst in the next section, showing the Investiture of St. Clare, we see the multi-winged polyptych with its baldachin completely closed [fig. 314].



Fig. 313: Hans Pleydenwurff and his workshop, panels of the *Altarpiece of St. Clare's Convent in Bamberg*: *St. Clare receives a Branch of the Easter Willow Tree Palm* and *St. Clare experiences a vision of the Holy Sacrament*, c. 1460–1462, Bamberg, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie

200 R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, pp. 150–151.



Fig. 314: Hans Pleydenwurff and his workshop, panel of the *Altarpiece of St. Clare's Convent in Bamberg: The Investiture of St. Clare*, c. 1460–1462, Bamberg, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie

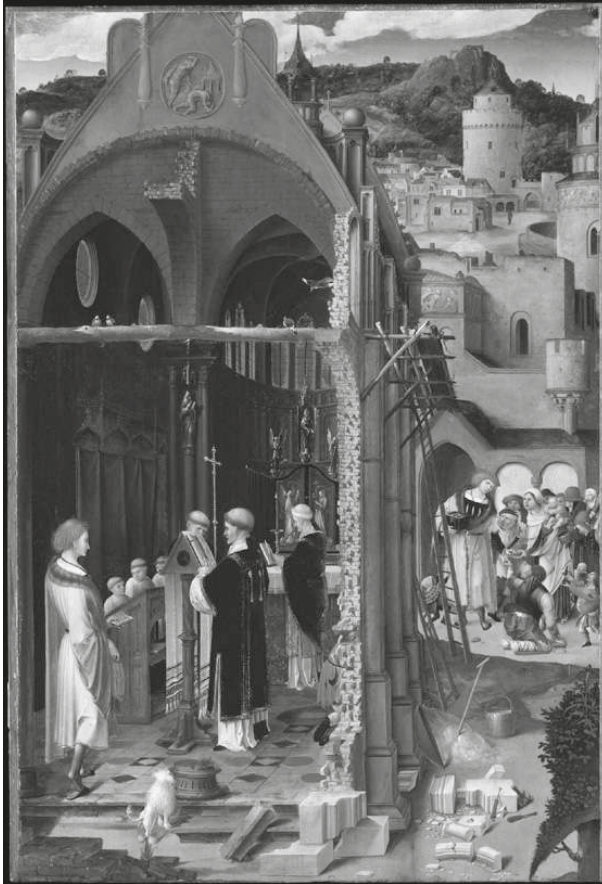


Fig. 315: Master from Antwerp, *A Sermon on Charity* (possibly *The Conversion of Saint Anthony*), c. 1520, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund (08.183.2)



Fig. 316: Konrad Witz, *Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine*, c. 1440, Strasburg, Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame

Though not a strictly liturgical procedure like the celebration of the mass, preaching to a congregation of friars, clerics, and laymen is the subject of the panel discussed above in a different context by an unknown Master from Antwerp, dated c. 1520 – *A Sermon on Charity* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) [fig. 315].²⁰¹ The depiction shows a solemn moment from the life of the monastic congregation, which takes place in a church, before the altar. One priest preaches at the pulpit, whilst the second one stands by the altar and glances downwards into the book resting on a

201 M.W. Ainsworth, K. Christiansen et al., *From Van Eyck to Bruegel: Early Netherlandish Painting in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York 1998, cat. no. 94.

support placed at the altar. Both wear the full liturgical vestment – with the cope, chasuble, dalmatic and alb. This suggests that the preaching takes place during the mass, whilst the retable is closed, demonstrating in this state an *en grisaille* scene of the Annunciation.

Moreover, in old iconography we encounter depictions of open-winged altarpieces included in scenes that are neither connected with the mass, or liturgical or festive situations. It seems that this is the case with the famous altarpiece by Konrad Witz of *Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine* (c. 1440, Strasburg, Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame) [fig. 316].²⁰² In the aisle of the church, there is a retable depicting the Crucifixion inside the open triptych. The holy virgins sit humbly on the pavement: St. Catherine reads her book, whilst St. Mary Magdalene proffers her a container of ointment (her attribute); undoubtedly the scene represents a pious conversation in ordinary life, only the gesture of passing the balms, referencing the embalming of Christ's body, connects the two saints with the theme of the triptych – the Crucifixion.

Can these paintings and miniatures – without confirmation from the written sources – be treated as an evidence corroborating the hypothesis about the unencumbered treatment of the altarpiece – at times open or closed – during the liturgy and apart from the mass? Perhaps, they reflect merely a creative invention of various artists, a kind of imaginative *licentia poetica*. Perhaps, certain elements are depicted only to enrich the composition, and have no relation to the actual customs or rules practised in churches. This latter assertion seems to me rather unlikely, as there is nothing to support it. In fact, it

202 J. Wirth, "Remarques sur le tableau de Konrad Witz conservé à Strasbourg," *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte*, 44.1987, pp. 117–127. Konrad Witz: G. Schmidt, *Konrad Witz*. Königstein i.T. 1962; H.J. van Miegroet, *De invloed van de vroege Nederlandse schilderkunst in de eerste helft van de 15^{de} eeuw op Konrad Witz*, Brussels 1986; M. Schauder, "Konrad Witz und die Utrechter Buchmalerei," in: *Masters and miniatures: proceedings of the Congress on medieval manuscript illumination in the Northern Netherlands* (Utrecht 1989), ed. by K. van der Horst, J.-Ch. Klamt, Doornspijk 1991, pp. 137–147; F. Rücklin, "Konrad Witz et ses commanditaires français," *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 57, 2000, pp. 105–130; S. Kemperdick, "Die erste Generation," in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck bis Dürer...*, pp. 58–59; A. Morath-Fromm, "Schwaben und Oberrhein-Gebiet," in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck bis Dürer*, pp. 278–279; K. Althaus, *Konrad Witz. Ein Pionier der Malerei im 15. Jahrhundert*, Königstein i.T. 2011; B. Brinkmann et al., *Konrad Witz*, exh. cat., Kunstmuseum, Basel 2011; J. Lucas, *Europa in Basel. Das Konzil von Basel (1431–1449) als Laboratorium der Kunst*, Basel 2017, passim.

is hard to imagine that pure artistic licence would determine such an important aspect of the religious ritual as the mode of viewing the altarpieces they painted. Even if one accepts such a hypothesis – which I reject – this nonchalance would be strong evidence for the existence of various approaches to the celebration of the mass before either closed or open altarpieces.

A lot speaks for the first hypothesis. The paintings can provide important historical information, in a similar way to written texts. Though historians working in the archives often refuse to acknowledge the value of visual sources, they fetishize written accounts, neglecting the fact that they often lie. Such accounts manipulate the facts, or falsify them, bending the truth for various tedious reasons; therefore, they always need to be approached with nuanced contextual knowledge. Clearly, such knowledge is also required in the use of images as historical accounts. However, the examples discussed above do not raise any doubts in that respect. They are all characterised by a great level of realism in the depiction of specific items (though they can be an interpretation of a generalised scene, a typical representation of the liturgy, a depiction of the ideal mass or liturgy). Moreover, everything is accurately represented, depicted according to our knowledge of late medieval liturgical artefacts used at the altar, reflecting the forms of surviving items (retables, vessels, vestments *etc.*). Furthermore, the gestures, poses and position of the priests, both in relation to the altarpiece and within the church interiors depicted in the panels and illuminations, are also confirmed by what we know about church rituals at that time. One could argue that the images are unreliable in those instances where the depicted triptychs are folded and the metal rods at the sides, with hanging curtains that frame the space of the altar, seem to make it impossible for the wings to be opened (as in the painting by the Master of St. Agilof, the painting of the *Sermon on Charity*, the miniature in *Seelengärtlein*). However, these depictions only confirm that the wings of the triptychs were intended to be open only partially, to be placed diagonally to the central part, which I discuss later in this chapter. Thus, they should be treated as a reliable source, because they capture unusual circumstances and not merely the most typical situations.

The suspicion towards the credibility of these images, and the reality of what they depict, is neither necessary nor needed. It would be a redundant cautiousness, or even the distrust of a doubter, to refute the visualised scene. I believe that these images depict an authentic historic reality, although there are not as many events recorded by them as is likely to have occurred.

This explanation allows us to go further in the discussion of the opening or closing of the folded altarpieces.

One may assume – though we lack specific sources – that it would be logical to leave the altarpiece closed on those feasts to which the images depicted on the outside of the external wings referred. If a closed triptych

or polyptych showed, as was often the case, scenes from the life of the Virgin, and images of the Passion were depicted inside, then it would make sense to present it with the wings shut during feasts dedicated to the Virgin. Similarly, it would be safe to assume that the retables with wings without any figurative decoration on the outside, merely painted with a single colour or with imitations of marble or porphyry, were likely to be kept typically opened. It was certainly the case, when the external wings were unfinished, or only covered with paint or a type of varnish.



Fig. 317: Joos van Cleve, *The Annunciation*, c. 1525, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Friedsam Collection, 1931, 32.100.60



Fig. 318: Joos van Cleve, *The Dormition of the Virgin*, central panel of the triptych, 1515, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum



Fig. 319: Joos van Cleve, *The Dormition of the Virgin*, central panel of the triptych, before 1523, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek

Undoubtedly, triptychs intended for domestic use or destined for private chapels, and perhaps also those which functioned in the chapels of confraternities – used in devotions based on prayer and meditation – were opened and closed not according to the liturgical calendar but following the individual needs of the faithful. This free approach to handling the folded triptychs and diptychs in a private space seems to be illustrated in paintings by Joos van Cleve. His *Annunciation* from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (c. 1525) [fig. 317] takes place in the chamber of a wealthy patrician house.²⁰³ Placed against the wall, on the altar cupboard, the small triptych has one wing open, which allows the viewer to glance inside, where there is a scene taking place in a landscape. Did the artist want to achieve through this trick a sequence of symbolic openings: an open window with a view out to the city; an open triptych with its view of a painted landscape; a festive bed with the curtain pushed aside? These suggests a number of Marian symbols: the Virgin inspired by the Holy Spirit in the form of the rays entering into the room from the sky through the window; the Virgin as the altar (the life of the future Eucharistic body of Christ); the Virgin as the vessel of the Incarnation and the womb of the immaculate conception of Christ (motif *thalamus Mariae*)? Or did he perhaps conceive of an everyday life scene: the Virgin, just as every pious Netherlandish lady, had just finished praying at her domestic altar, when the unusual messenger came to visit her? In the two triptychs with the *Dormition of the Virgin*, by the same master, the domestic altarpiece in the background is showed once with its wings open and once with them shut: the former situation is visible in the triptych from Cologne (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum), the latter in the panel from Munich (Alte Pinakothek) [figs. 318–319].²⁰⁴

In turn, the mere existence of the many single surface ‘panel’ triptychs (such as the *Altarpiece from Miraflores* or the *Altarpiece of John the Baptist* by Rogier van der Weyden from the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin) – with “wings” that cannot be folded – means that the permanent, everyday image with saintly figures and events was thoroughly accepted, and that there was no rule as to the closing of the central section with the wings. Triptychs and polyptychs with images of the donors inside (as the *Triptych of the Crucifixion* by Rogier from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, and the *Triptych of the Canon Peter Wartenberg* from Wrocław dated 1468, now

203 M.W. Ainsworth, K. Christiansen et al., *From Van Eyck to Bruegel...*, cat. no. 97.

204 P. van den Brink et al., *Joos van Cleve. Leonardo des Nordens*, exh. cat., Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen 2011, pp. 32 and 51.

in the National Museum in Warsaw) [fig. 320], displayed in chapels or on the pillars of the naves, were perhaps kept open more frequently than we tend to think – in such a way as to allow the depicted figures to ensure the salvation of their soul through the prayers of the people coming to the church. Even the most basic need to manifest the role of the patron, who ordered his portrait in the altarpiece for a reason, played a significant role in the depiction: surely, he wanted to be seen permanently, or at least very frequently, for his heirs and visitors to the church, who would approach the commissioned retable. Similarly, the *Ghent Altarpiece*, to establish a connection between the donors Jodocus Vijd and Elisabeth Borluut, and the sacramental program of the inside of the retable, frequently had to be shown in a partially revealed state, with the upper register open and the lower closed [fig. 321].



Fig. 320: Master from Nuremberg, active in Breslau/Wrocław, or a local Breslau master, *Triptych of Canon Peter Wartenberg*, 1468, Warsaw, National Museum



Fig. 321: Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, 1432, Ghent, St. Bavo's Cathedral – partially opened

Moreover, the fact that Andreas Stoss so rigorously regulated the mode of viewing his father's triptych clearly means that the rules and customs governing the opening and closing of the altarpiece were not very strictly observed. The *Ghent Altarpiece*, for instance, was open for the curious travellers. Albrecht Dürer paid to see the altarpiece during his trip to the Netherlands. The accounts of subsequent journeymen suggest that the similar mode of viewing was also applied to the *Angelic Salutation* by Veit Stoss in Nuremberg, concealed with a cloth cover on a daily basis.

As a rule, church altarpieces were closed for most of the year. The Marian altarpiece in the church of St. Lawrence in Nuremberg, as is described in the sacristans' books, was open only eleven times a year. In such large churches, with numerous side altars, this solution was normal and natural. The church in Nuremberg had fourteen such altarpieces, therefore many retables were opened in an alternating sequence, which allowed the faithful to continue praying, and for the priest to conduct masses and services throughout the year.²⁰⁵

205 S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 241.

There is one further issue worth discussing. Many polyptychs from central Europe, mostly from Nuremberg and Silesia, feature interesting technical solutions to difficulties encountered in their original locations. Namely, even the most impressive and prestigious high altarpieces in various churches, for instance the large polyptych from the parish church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Legnica / Liegnitz, or from the church of the Order of St. John in Strzegom / Striegau / Striegau (both in the National Museum in Warsaw) [fig. 322], have paintings on the reverse sides of their external wings, directly on a panel without ground.²⁰⁶ The surface of the panel was only sized thinly with glue, and the artist painted directly on that support. From the point of view of workshop practice, this was a truly shocking approach! The layers of paint on plain wooden panels are always structurally more vulnerable, less durable, and more susceptible to damage over time than those on other supports, as they age faster. Above all, this solution reduces the saturation of colour, giving the impression of a dull surface and greyish tonality. This is because the lack of a white ground prevents the surface as a means of reflecting light, coming through the layers of paint. This is comparable to fifteenth-century painting on unprimed canvases, which are similarly dull and which aged quickly. By contrast, the practice of applying a thick layer of varnish to wood panels created a smooth and luminous surface, and could partially compensate and conceal the rough texture of the wood and the reduced saturation of colour.

Why would artists decide to apply this simplified procedure, evidently transgressing the rules of good technological practice, commonly adopted throughout the traditional late medieval painting? Was it a way of reducing the costs of production for such large-scale altarpieces? This seems unlikely, since the glue and chalk ground was the cheapest material when preparing a painting, in contrast to the many expensive pigments and dyes used, or even to the price of wood. Was it related to the economy of time and labour, to skip the time-consuming stage of applying the ground and waiting for the layer to dry and adhere to the wooden support? Perhaps that was the case since the ground had to be applied to the large surfaces of the monumental wings. Even if this was true, to save, what was still, an insignificant amount of time, at the expense of a clear decrease in the quality and stability of the painting was not only a break with the guild regulations and workshop practice but defied the logic of pragmatic actions. Still artists adopted that approach.

206 This issue is being examined by Maciej Kazimierczak as a part of his ongoing PhD project. I am very grateful to him for pointing out to me this important issue and for sharing with me his observations and preliminary hypotheses.



Fig. 322: Nikolaus Obilman, Polyptych from the Parish Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Legnica, 1466, Warsaw, National Museum – reconstruction of the original arrangement of the figures and panels (after Jacek Witkowski); the lowest panels without ground; including: *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*

Perhaps, the method was consciously employed to highlight the lower rank of the external panels of the closed altarpiece, visible during the working days, to build a greater contrast with the impact of the colourful brightness found in the internal sections, viewed only during the festive openings. The slightly muted colours – of a lower saturation, and greyish – would somehow reflect the *en grisaille* tonality, applied at times in other winged retables, in the Netherlands and Germany, on the reverse sides of the wings of closed altarpieces. However, the *en grisaille* paintings were executed with the utmost technical precision, with artists meticulously following all the rules governing every stage of the practice of panel painting, using carefully prepared grounds. Moreover, the effect of painting directly on the panel is thoroughly different, or in fact opposite to the illusionistic imitation of smooth stone and the deep saturation of white, black and grey of the *en grisaille* paintings. Moreover, we lack clear information about the original tonality of the paintings on panels without grounds – surely they were once much more vivid – as the darkening of paint is a natural consequence of the process of its aging. However, these works were ostensibly less luminous than those painted on traditional white, chalk grounds.

This approach should not be read as attempt to show truth to the material (wood) according to the rule of *Holzichtigkeit*, or ‘wood-visibility,’ which was characteristic for the monochromatic sculpture known through the oeuvre of Tilman Riemenschneider, Veit Stoss and Jakob Beinhart. The rule is commonly understood as an attempt to demonstrate to the viewer that he/she is encountering a work of art and not a saintly figure directly, and therefore to disassociate any idolatrous behaviour from an admiration for the work of art itself. In the paintings painted directly on panels, one could not see the wood (if the surface is visible today it is due to the aging of the paint, which causes it to become more transparent): the layer of paint was sufficiently opaque.

Perhaps the practice was, in fact, motivated by economic considerations and the will to save money on materials, labour and time, justified – as an excuse – by the lesser significance of the external side of the altarpiece, displayed constantly on working days. But this explanation again raises questions about the logic of such practice: if these panels were to be displayed constantly, their vulnerability would be a huge disadvantage considering the daily exposure to light, humidity, dust and the greasy fumes of the candles, or even accidental damage. Therefore, it would be sensible to execute this side of the altarpiece in a technique that would guarantee the best possible resistance and durability. But this was not considered during the creation of many altarpieces from Silesia and Franconia. The question remains open for now and perhaps new light will be shed on the issue through further technical investigations of

the structure of the wood, the glue coat, the paint recipes and the qualities of the original varnish, of which traces perhaps survive on some panels.

Triptychs and polyptych with moveable wings were not always viewed with the wings fully open. This is an analogous situation to the diptychs described above. The display of the triptych with side panels open diagonally is documented in a fairly numerous manuscript illuminations and panel paintings. For instance, in a miniature in the *Book of Hours of James IV of Scotland* from c. 1502–1503 (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, ms. 1897, fol. 24v) [fig. 323] the king prays before an altar, upon which is a retable with its wings seemingly open at an angle, to display Christ as Salvator Mundi in the central panel and St. Andrew on one of the wings. The celebration of the mass, depicted in the miniature of the *Da Costa Hours* (New York, Morgan Library, ms 399, fol. 369v) – illuminated c. 1515 by Simon Bening for a Portuguese nobleman from Porto, João Rodrigues de Sá, or c. 1520 for a dignitary at the court of the king Manuel I, Don Alvaro da Costa – also takes place before a carved triptych with the wings open at an angle.²⁰⁷ In the scenes of the *Coronation of the King* and the *Coronation of the Queen* in the *Roman Pontifical of Erasmus Ciołek* (Erasm Vitello, c. 1510–1515, Cracow, The Princes Czartoryski Library, ms. Czart.1212 IV, fol. XXXVI and LII) [fig. 324] the retable of the high altar is shown with its wings open diagonally.²⁰⁸ The Master of the Legend of St. Bruno in a painting from the Charterhouse in Cologne called *The Miracle of the Speaking Corpse of St. Bruno* (c. 1488–1489, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) [fig. 325]²⁰⁹ depicts the scene in a vast church interior, with a choir decorated with a triptych or pentptych with diagonally placed wings. A similar scene is depicted by the Master of the Legend of St. Ursula from Cologne, in a panel of the *Altarpiece of St. Ursula*, which shows the saint praying before the altar

207 R.S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art*, exh. cat., Pierpont Morgan Library, New York 1997, cat. no. 17.

208 B. Miodońska, *Rex Regum i Rex Poloniae w dekoracji malarskiej Graduatu Jana Olbrachta i Pontyfikatu Erazma Ciołka. Z zagadnień ikonografii władzy królewskiej w sztuce polskiej*, Cracow 1979. Further bibliography in: A. Brzozowska, *Humanistyczna ideologia władzy w mowach politycznych i dekoracji malarskiej Pontyfikatu biskupa płockiego Erazma Ciołka (Ms. Czart. 1212 IV)*, Rozprawy Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie s.n. V, 2012, pp. 27–56.

209 F.G. Zehnder, *Altkölner Malerei*, pp. 244–250, figs. 163–164.

with her parents (Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) [fig. 326].²¹⁰ In the aforementioned *Triptych of the Dormition of the Virgin* by Joos van Cleve (Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum), the wings of the retable depicted in the back are also placed at an angle [fig. 318]. One could find many more such representations.



Fig. 323: Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?), *King James IV of Scotland before an Altar*, a miniature in the *Book of Hours of James IV of Scotland*, c. 1502–1503, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, ms. 1897, fol. 24v

²¹⁰ F.G. Zehnder, *Altkölner Malerei*, p. 382, fig. 248.

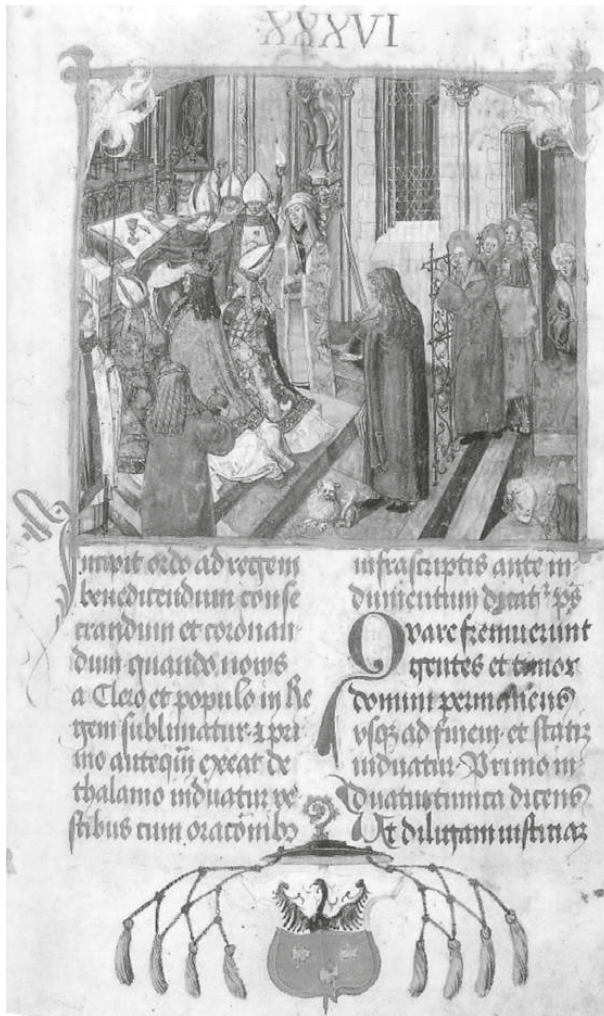


Fig. 324: *Coronation of the King*, illumination from the *Roman Pontifical of Erasmus Ciołek*, c. 1510–1515, Cracow, National Museum, Czartoryski Library, ms. Czart.1212 IV, fol. XXXVI

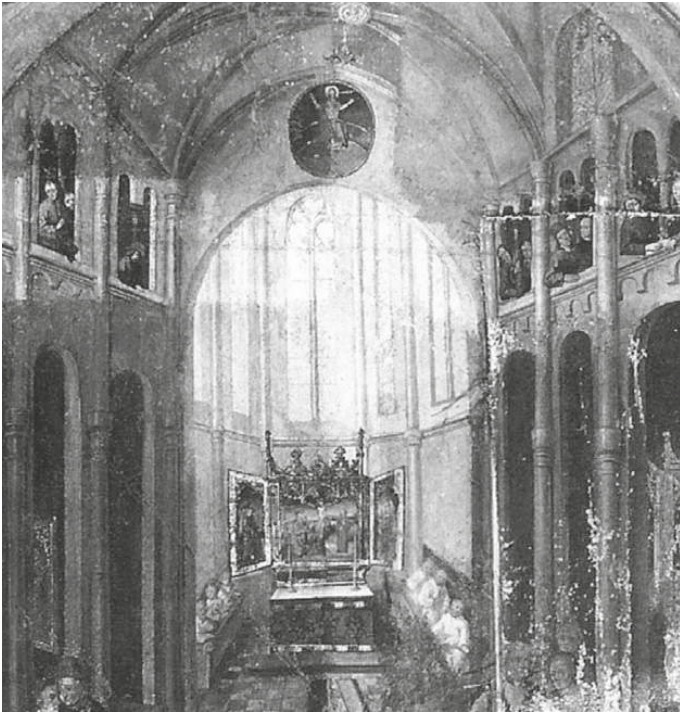


Fig. 325: Master of the Legend of St. Bruno, *The Miracle of the Speaking Corpse of St. Bruno*, c. 1488–1489, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, detail



Fig. 326: Master of the Legend of St. Ursula, *St. Ursula Praying before the Altar with her Parents*, panel of the *Altarpiece of St. Ursula*, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum



Fig. 327: *The Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck, view with the diagonal opening of wings



Fig. 328: Master from the workshop of Robert Campin, Master of the Seilern Triptych, *Seilern Triptych*, c. 1427–1435, London, The Courtauld Gallery, photo of the display

Furthermore, we know that the *Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck was not viewed fully open, with the wings unfolded to form a single painterly surface [fig. 327]. As demonstrated by Till-Holger Borchert (2008), the Vijd chapel in the parish church of St. John was not sufficiently spacious for such an opening. The wings could only be opened in a narrow, diagonal position, with a tilted position of the upper and lower wings. The diagonal opening of the wings was more dynamic, than the fully flat opening, which would have been impossible to achieve in this location. This explains the unusual, uneven format of the panels in the upper and lower registers. Therefore, it seems that from the outset the structure of the wings was designed in such a way that the frames of the lower panels, for the greater stability of the upper section, were pushed slightly to the side, off the axis of their frames. The diagonal position of the wing created for the viewer a sense of being surrounded from the three sides by the internal panels of the altarpiece. According to Borchert, this was a conscious choice, which allowed van Eyck to imitate the inside of chapels in churches or in private residences, which had frescoes painted on various levels of their walls.²¹¹

211 T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck*, (2008), p. 32. Cf. A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Brugundii Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 228–229; *Van Eyck* 2020, *passim*.

Viewed at an angle, in a diagonal position, the wings of the altarpieces gain their full meaning. They show the figures of the donors and saints establishing an eye contact with the image in the centre. They no longer look into the distance, but towards the key figures of the altarpiece, with whom they can now communicate. In the *Seilern Triptych* (*Triptych of the Entombment*) from the earlier workshop active in the painterly enterprise of Robert Campin (London, Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery) [figs. 328], when the wings are positioned diagonally, the donor looks directly at the body of Christ – at the *Corpus Christi*, which is venerated in this retable. As already mentioned, this area was frequently touched and presumably also kissed by the faithful, which can be inferred from the abrasions.²¹² Michele Giustiniani, if he is in fact the donor depicted on the wing of the *Dresden Triptych* by Jan van Eyck [fig. 482], can glance directly in adoration towards the Virgin and Child in the central panel only when the altarpiece is partially open. The altarpiece, because of its small dimensions, could not only be hung on the wall, but also placed on a table or a shelf. However, this positioning of the wings distorts the effect of perspectival depth in the depiction of the architecture of the painted church that is depicted: the aisles seen in the side panels diverge to the sides. Depending on the desired effect – to establish a connection between the figures, or to create perspectival accuracy – the beholder had to manipulate the position of the wings.

The triptychs depicting the architectural setting were typically intended to be viewed with their wings fully open, so as to form a single plane, as for instance in the *Altarpiece of the Seven Sacraments* by Rogier van der Weyden (Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) [fig. 329], which – today displayed as a single panel – was originally (presumably) a folded triptych. In this work the portraits of the donor, the bishop Jean Chevrot and people from his entourage were painted on separate tin foils, in such a manner that the figures observe the scene depicted inside, in the central nave of the central panel, in a natural way.²¹³ In single panel

212 Cf. note 154.

213 For the procedure of mounting portrait heads, painted earlier on small sheets of tin foil see: R.H. Marijnissen, G. Van De Voorde, “Een onverklaarde werkwijze van de Vlaamse primitieven,” *Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Akademie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België. Klasie der Schone Kunsten* 44/2, 1983, pp. 43–51; R.H. Marijnissen, G. Van de Voorde, “Un procédé énigmatique des primitif flamands. Annotations concernant l’oeuvre de Joos van Wassenhove, Hugo van der Goes, Roger van der Weyden

en Hans Memling,” in: *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture* (Colloque, Louvain-la-Neuve 1983), ed. by R. van Schoute, D. Hollanders-Favart, Louvain-la-Neuve 1985, pp. 23–24; R.H. Marijnissen, *Tableaux: authentiques – maquillés – faux*, Brussels 1985, pp. 347–353; L. Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits: European Portrait-Painting in the 14th, 15th and 16th Centuries*, New Haven–London 1990, p. 177; L. Campbell, “The Making of Portraits,” in: *Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian*, ed. by L. Campbell, M. Falomir, J. Fletcher, L. Syson, exh. cat., National Gallery, London 2008, pp. 32–45, here: p. 41; C. Metzger, G. Steyaert, “Painting, A Distinct Profession,” in: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, pp. 162–179; here pp. 173–174; R.H. Marijnissen, G. Van de Voorde, *The Masters’ and the Forgers’ Secrets: X-ray Authentication of Paintings from Early Netherlandish till Modern*, Brussels 2009; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 399–402 and bibliography in note 489. For the *Altarpiece of the Seven Sacraments* by Rogier van der Weyden see: De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 11; A. Châtelet, *Rogier van der Weyden. Problèmes...*, pp. 133–136; his, *Rogier van der Weyden / Rogier de le Pasture*, pp. 72–75; Kemperdick Rogier 1999/2007, pp. 46–50; H. van Os, “De religieuze leesplank van een vijftiende-eeuwse conceptualist,” in: *Beeldenstorm 4: Close ups van kunst uit musea*, Amsterdam 2000, pp. 19–22; L. Nys, “Le retable des Sept Sacrements du musée des Beaux-Arts d’Anvers: Tournai ou Poligny?... Tournai et Poligny!,” in: *De Pise à Trente: la réforme de l’église en gestation. Regards croisés entre Escaut et Meuse*, (Actes du colloque international de Tournai 2004), ed. by M. Maillard-Luyppaert, J.-M. Cauchies, Brussels 2005, pp. 293–335; L. Nys, “Par deçà et par delà, de Tournai à Poligny. Usages et fonctions de l’oeuvre d’art chez un grand prélat bourguignon, Jean Chevrot,” in: *L’Artiste et le Clerc. La commande artistique des grands ecclésiastiques à la fin du Moyen Âge (XIVe–XVIe siècles)*, Paris 2006, pp. 41–103; C. Metzger, G. Steyaert, “Painting, A Distinct Profession,” in: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, pp. 162–179; L. Campbell, G. Steyaert in: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, cat. no. 81; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 283–286 and bibliography in note 487; G. Steyaert, “‘The Seven Sacraments’: Some technical aspects observed during the restoration,” in: *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, pp. 119–136; L. Campbell, “‘The Seven Sacraments,’” in: *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, pp. 137–146; M. Postec, “Technical reconstitutions based on ‘The Seven Sacraments’ by Rogier van der Weyden: An experimental approach,” in: *Rogier van der Weyden in Context*, pp. 147–158; D. Martens, “Les représentations architecturales dans la peinture bruxelloise de la seconde moitié du XV^e siècle,” in: *L’héritage de Rogier van der Weyden. La peinture à Bruxelles 1450–1520*, ed. by V. Bücken, G. Steyaert, exh. cat., Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels 2013; L. Campbell et al., *Rogier van der Wyden and the Kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula*, exh. cat., Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid 2015, cat. no. 4.

retables by Rogier – the *Triptych from Miraflores* or the *Triptych of St. John* (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie) [figs. 30–31], created for a Spanish audience accustomed to the single panel retable with various sections – the artist fully explored the opportunities offered by the flatness of all panels. In the Rogier's example, every panel has an individual perspective, all are seen frontally, while in the second altarpiece the depicted spaces are linked by a single vanishing point, so that they could be viewed together, from a single view point, frontally before the altar. In the *Mérode Altarpiece* from the workshop of Master of Flémalle, probably executed by the young Rogier (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) [fig. 330],²¹⁴ the side wing with the donors should *not* be viewed at an angle, with the two figures looking into the chamber through the half-open doors depicted in the central panel, in order to preserve the logic of the spatial arrangement; the stairs to the home must be seen on the flatly displayed surface of the painting.

214 *The Mérode Triptych by the workshop of the Master of Flémalle*: E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting...*, pp. 129, 142–143, 164–167; Ch. de Tolnay, “L’Autel Mérode du Maître de Flémalle,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 53, 1959, pp. 65–78; M.S. Frinta, *The Genius of Robert Campin*, pp. 13–28; M.J. Friedländer, (revised by) N. Verhaegen, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, Leiden 1967–1976, vol. I: *Rogier van der Weyden and the Master of Flémalle*, 1967, pp. 36–37, no. 54; M. Davies, *Rogier van der Weyden. Ein Essay. Mit einem kritischen Katalog aller ihm und Robert Campin zugeschriebenen Werke*, Munich 1972, pp. 121–123; L. Campbell, “Robert Campin, the Master of Flémalle and the Master of Mérode,” *Burlington Magazine* 116, 1974, pp. 638–643; J. Dijkstra, *Origineel en kopie. Een onderzoek naar de navolging van de Meester van Flémalle en Rogier van der Weyden*, Amsterdam 1990, p. 162–173; R.L. Falkenburg, “Het huis-houden van de ziel. Burgerlijk décor in het Mérode-altaarstuk,” in: *Op belofde van profijt*, ed. by H. Pleij et al., Amsterdam 1991, pp. 244–261, in English: “The household of the soul: Conformity in the Mérode Triptych,” in: *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies*, (symposium The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1998), ed. by M.W. Ainsworth, New Haven–London–New York 2001, pp. 2–17; J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer, J. Dijkstra, R. van Schoute et al., “Underdrawing in Paintings of the Rogier van der Weyden and Master of Flémalle Groups,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 41, 1990, Zwolle 1992, pp. 103–116; A. Châtelet, *Robert Campin. Le Maître de Flémalle. La fascination du quotidien*, Antwerp 1996, pp. 92–113, cat. no. 6; J. Dijkstra, “The Brussels and the Mérode Annunciation Reconsidered,” in: *Robert Campin: New Directions in Scholarship*, ed. by S. Foister, S. Nash, Turnhout 1996, pp. 95–104; C. Stroo, P. Syfer-d’Oline, *The Flemish Primitives: Catalogue of Early Netherlandish Painting in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium*,



Fig. 329: Rogier van der Weyden, *Altarpiece of the Seven Sacraments*, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

vol. 1: *The Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden Groups*, Brussels 1996, esp. pp. 34–47; S. Kemperdick, *Der Meister von Flémalle. Die Werkstatt Robert Campins und Rogier van der Weyden*, Turnhout 1997, pp. 12–28; F. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin. Das Mérode-Triptychon. Ein Hochzeitsbild für Peter Engelbrecht und Gretchen Schrinmechers aus Köln*, Frankfurt a.M. 1997; M.W. Ainsworth, K. Christiansen et al., *From Van Eyck to Bruegel...*, cat. no. 2; F. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin: A Monographic Study...*, pp. 58–76, cat. no. I.18; B. Ridderbos, “Objects and Questions,” in: *Early Netherlandish Paintings. Rediscovery, Reception and Research*, ed. by B. Ridderbos, A. van Buren, H. van Veen, Amsterdam 2005, pp. 16–23; Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, cat. no. 4 and passim; B. Eclercy, “Vom Mausfallen und Ofenschirmen. Zum Problem des ‘disguised symbolism’ bei den frühen Niederländern,” in: *Early Netherlandish Paintings...*, pp. 133–147; L. F. Jacobs, *Opening Doors...*, pp. 33–60; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 176–185 and 498–503, bibliography in note 254; M. Russell, “The woodworker and the Redemption: the right shutter of the Merode triptych,” *Simiolus*, 39, 2017, no. 4, pp. 335–350.



Fig. 330: The workshop of Master of Flémalle, *Mérode Altarpiece*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1956, 56.70

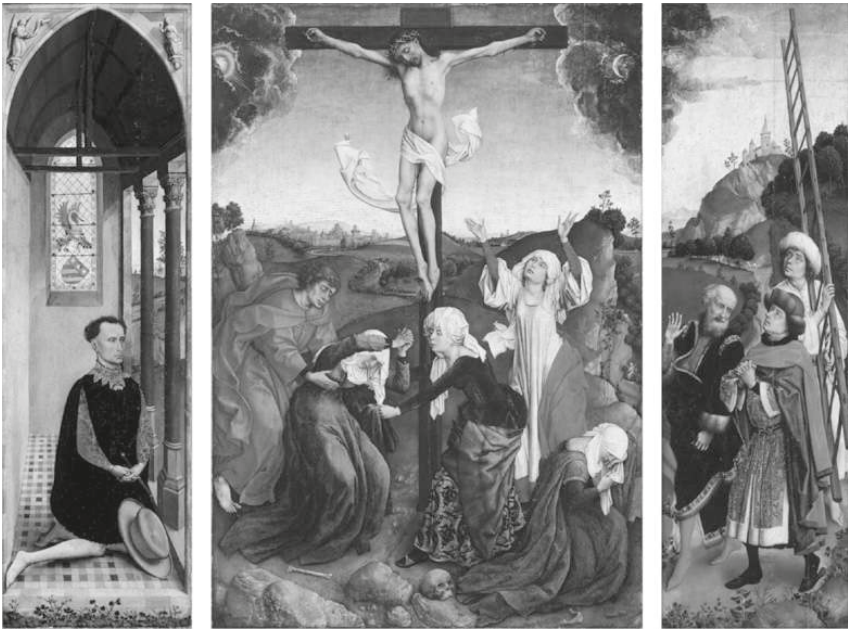


Fig. 331: Rogier van de Weyden's workshop, *Abegg Triptych (Triptych of the Crucifixion, The De Villa Triptych)*, Riggisberg, Abegg-Stiftung, 14.2.63



Fig. 332: Rogier van der Weyden, *Braque Triptych*, c. 1452, Paris, Musée du Louvre



Fig. 333: Rogier van der Weyden, *Triptych of the Crucifixion*, after 1447, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 334: Dirk Bouts, Hugo van der Goes and Aert van den Bossche, *Triptych of the Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus*, before 1475 – c. 1480, Leuven, Sint-Salvatorskerk

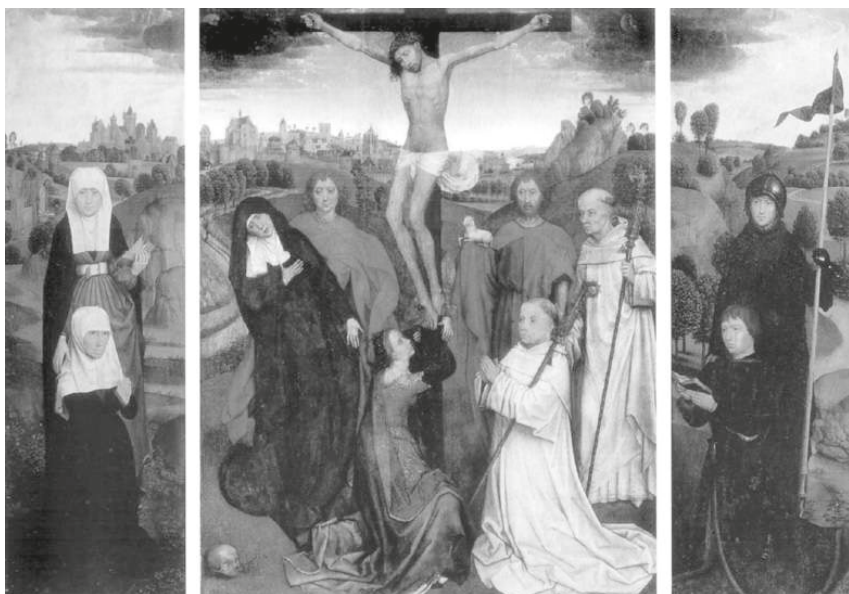


Fig. 335: Hans Memling, *Triptych of Jan Crabbe*, before 1465; central panel – Vicenza, Museo Civico; wings – New York, The Morgan Library & Museum



Fig. 336: Hans Memling, *Altarpiece of the Moreel Family*, 1484 – before 1489, Bruges, Groeningemuseum



Fig. 337: Gerard David, *Sedano Triptych*, Paris, Musée du Louvre



Fig. 338: Gerard David, *Triptych of the Baptism of Christ*, Bruges, Groeningemuseum



Fig. 339: Jheronimus Bosch, *Triptych of the Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1495–1500, Madrid, Museo del Prado

In turn, in the *Abegg Triptych* from Rogier's workshop (Riggisberg, Abegg-Stiftung) [fig. 331] the diagonal position of the wings highlights the directions of the gazes of the figures depicted on the wings – the donor from the Villa family and the witnesses to the Crucifixion – and directly links them to the body of Christ, which hangs on the cross.²¹⁵ Furthermore, the edge of the rocky cliffs in the bottom left hand section of the central panel is continued through into the line of the doorstep of the colonnaded loggia depicted in the left panel. A similar opening of the *Braque Triptych*, by Van der Weyden, now in the Louvre [fig. 332], gives the effect of surrounding the central figure of Christ with assisting holy figures to form a circle, which is determined by the semi-circular horizon visible in that position of the wings.²¹⁶ In the *Triptych of the Crucifixion*, now in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum) [fig. 333],²¹⁷ the opening of the right wing

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- 215 *Abegg Triptych* from the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden: De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 10 and the excursus on pp. 215–216; Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, cat. no. 31; L. Campbell, “The De Villa Family and Rogier van der Weyden,” in: Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier* 2009, p. 348. A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 245–247, 275–276; S. Kemperdick, *Ein Kreuzigungstriptychon von Rogier van der Weyden*, (Monographien der Abegg-Stiftung 20) Riggisberg 2014.
- 216 *Braque Triptych* by Rogier van der Weyden: De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 19 (with further literature); P. Lorentz, M. Comblen-Sonkes, *Musée du Louvre, Paris, III, (Les primitifs flamands: Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux et de la Principauté de Liège au quizième siècle / The Flemish Primitives: Corpus of Fifteenth-Century Painting in the Southern Netherlands and the Principality of Liège)*, Brussels 2001, pp. 133–184; V. Vaes, *De Braque-triptiek (ca. 1452) van Rogier van der Weyden (1399/1400–1464) in het Musée du Louvre te Parijs. Een iconografische, stilistische en typologische studie*, B.A. thesis, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 2003; Kemperdick *Rogier* 1999/2007, pp. 71–77; V. Vaes, “A Phoenix from the flames...: the testament of Catherine de Brabant (ca. 1431–1499) and its relationship to Rogier van der Weyden's ‘Braque triptych’” (ca. 1452), *Oud-Holland* 121, 2008, no. 2/3, pp. 89–98; P.H. Jolly, “The Wise and Foolish Magdalene, the Good Widow, and Roger van der Weyden's Braque Triptych,” *Studies in iconography*, 31, 2010, pp. 98–156; A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 250 and 299–301 (bibliography in note 398).
- 217 *The Vienna Crucifixion Triptych* by Rogier van der Weyden: De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 13 (with further literature); Kemperdick *Rogier* 1999/2007, p. 50; L.D. Gelfand, W.S. Gibson, “Surrogate Selves: The ‘Rolin Madonna’ and the Late-Medieval Devotional Portrait,” *Simiolus* 29, 2002, pp. 119–138, here pp. 122–124; B. Rothstein, “Gender and the Configuration of Early Netherlandish Devotional Skill,” in: *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity*, ed. by A. Pearson, Aldershot 2008,

reveals the position of the face of the donor, which corresponds to the face of Christ on St. Veronica's veil; this is imperceptible with the wings fully open. The female patron with her absent gaze and lowered eyelids, looking downwards, is depicted in a moment of introspection. She glances inwardly, focused on the meditation and contemplation of the spiritual image, unlike her husband, who looks at the body of Christ on the cross. The man represents the sensory vision and a piety nourished by external images, whilst the woman reflects the religious spirituality promoted by the Church reformers: Jean Gerson and other theologians who shared his views, *devotio moderna*.²¹⁸ Her spiritual seeing is complemented by the contact of her face with the face of Christ, as if in the act of touching and kissing of a celebrated relic, kept in Rome and copied in numerous holy images in northern art.

In the *Triptych of the Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus* by Dirk Bouts, Hugo van der Goes and Aert van den Bossche (Leuven, Sint-Salvatorskerk) [fig. 334] the left wing with the donors, Hippolyte de Berthoz and Elisabeth Huygheins de Keverwyck, when open diagonally, directs their gazes to the body of the martyr to whom they direct their prayers. In the *Triptych of Jan Crabbe* by Memling (central panel: Vicenza, Museo Civico; wings: New York, Morgan Library and Museum) [fig. 335], the position of the wings at an angle allows for the interconnection of the gazes of the three donors: the abbot Crabbe is depicted in the central panel, and his mother, Anna Willemzoon, and nephew, Willem de Winter, in the side panels. Similarly, in a large-scale *Altarpiece of the Morel Family* by Memling (1484–1489, Bruges, Groeningemuseum) [fig. 336] the entire patrician family from Bruges seems to be looking at the figures of Sts. Christopher, Maurice and Giles, who are in the central panel, whilst also seeing each other, if the wings are positioned at the right angle. It is only in this position that Benedetto Portinari could see the Virgin and Child depicted in the centre of the original triptych of 1487, now divided between the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (the panel with the Virgin) and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence (the wings with St. Benedict and the portrait of the donor). The patrons depicted on the wings of the fully open *Sedano Triptych* by Gerard David (Paris, Louvre) [fig. 337] gaze in a bizarre way: Jan de

pp. 15–34; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 273–274 (with bibliography in note 468); S. Geppert, *Mode unter dem Kreuz. Kleiderkommunikation im christlichen Kult*, Salzburg 2013.

218 Cf. B.L. Rothstein, "Gender and the Configuration of Early Netherlandish Devotional Skill," in: *Women and Portraits in Early Modern Europe: Gender, Agency, Identity*, ed. A. Pearson, Aldershot 2008, pp. 15–34.

Sedano appears to look at his wife Maria; she in turn looks at something or someone difficult to define. Only when the wings are placed diagonally, is their gaze directed to the Virgin and Child enthroned and accompanied by the angels in the central panel. With the flat opening of the panel in the *Triptych of the Baptism of Christ*, the famous masterpiece by David now in the Groeningemuseum, Bruges [fig. 338], the donors – Jan de Trompes and Elisabeth van der Meersch – look at each other, but they will see Christ in the central scene when the wings are slightly closed, resting at an angle. A similar manipulation is needed in the case of the *Triptych of the Adoration of the Magi* by Jheronimus Bosch, now in the Prado, Madrid, with portraits of Peeter Scheyfve and Agneese de Gramme [fig. 339].

There are many other examples of this approach. However, I do not wish to argue that the viewing of triptychs with the wings placed at an angle was mandatory or obligatory, and always intentionally planned by the artist. This was not the case – but this positioning offered new possibilities for experiencing these altarpieces, which revealed the spatial and symbolic relationships between the figures from the side and central panels.

III.2.3. Tapestries: folded and unfolded

Northern European tapestries, and particularly Flemish ones, were frequently large-scale objects, real giants, but even they were mobile and manipulated.²¹⁹

219 **Tapestries as objects of international trade: Flemish Tapestry Weavers Abroad: Emigration and the Founding of Manufactories in Europe**, ed. by G. Dumarcel, Leuven 2002; E. Cleland, *Tapestries as a transnational artistic commodity*, in: *Locating the Renaissance Art*, (Renaissance Art Rediscovered 2), ed. by C.M. Richardson, New Haven–London: Yale University Press 2007, pp. 103–132; A. Ziembra, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. III, chapters II.1.2 and III.4.4.3. **General surveys:** F. Joubert, “Les tapisseries de la fin du Moyen Âge. Commandes, destination, circulation,” *Revue de l’art* 120, 1998, pp. 89–99; G. Delmarcel, *Flemish Tapestry from the 15th to the 18th Century*, Tielt 1999; A. Rapp Buri, M. Stucky-Schürer, *Burgundische Tapisserien*, Munich 2001; Th.P. Campbell et al., *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2002; *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence: An International Symposium*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2002; *Flemish Tapestry in European and American Collections: Studies in Honour of Guy Demarcel*, ed. by K. Brosens, Turnhout 2003; E. Hartkamp-Jonxis, H. Smit, *European Tapestries in the Rijksmuseum*, Zwolle 2004. **Flemish tapestries in Spain:** G. Delmarcel et al., *Golden Weavings: Flemish Tapestries of the Spanish Crown*, exh. cat., Van Lijsbetten, Sint Nicolaas – Stichting Gaspard de Wit,

Mechelen 1993; *Âge d'or bruxellois. Tapisseries de la Couronne d'Espagne*, ed. by A. Smolar-Meynart, contribution: C. Paredes, exh. cat., Cathédrale Saint-Michel-et-Saint-Gudule, Brussels 2000; C. Herrero Carretero, *Tapices de Isabel la Católica / Tapestries of Isabella the Catholic*, Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid 2004. **Exports to Italy:** P. Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence...*, pp. 77–84, 114–115, and the appendix 3; see also H. Smit, “Flemish tapestry weavers in Italy c. 1420–1520: A survey and analysis of the activity in various cities,” in: *Flemish Tapestry Weavers Abroad...*, pp. 113–130. **Exports to England:** S. McKendrick, “Tapestries from the Low Countries in England during the fifteenth century,” in: *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. by C. Barron, N. Saul, Stroud 1993, pp. 43–60; Th.P. Campbell, *The English Royal Tapestry Collection: 1485–1547*, dissertation, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1999; S.G. Bell, *The Lost Tapestries of the City of Ladies, Christine de Pizan's Renaissance Legacy*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 2004; Th.P. Campbell, *Henry VIII and the Art of Majesty: Tapestries at the Tudor Court*, New Haven–London 2007. **Exports to France and the Netherlandish workshops located there:** P.-F. Bertrand, “Les tapisseries flamands en France au XV^e et XVI^e siècles,” in: *Flemish Tapestry Weavers Abroad...*, pp. 185–202; **Workshop of Pasquier Grenier & Sons:** E. Soil, *Les tapisseries de Tournai, les tapisseries et les hautlisseurs de cette ville*, Tournai 1891; P. Rolland, M. Crick-Kuntziger, M. Morelowski, “Le tapisserie Pasquier Grenier et l'église Saint-Quentin à Tournai,” *Revue Belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art* VI, 1936, pp. 203–221; J.-P. Asselberghs, *Les tapisseries tournaisiennes au XV^e siècle*, exh. cat., Cathédrale de Tournai, Tournai 1967; M. Piwocka, “Arras z historią rycerza z łabędziem,” *Studia do dziejów Wawelu* 3, 1968, pp. 295–333; J.-P. Asselberghs, *Le tapisseries tournaisiennes de la Guerre de Troie*, *Revue Belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art* 39, 1970, pp. 93–183; J.-P. Asselberghs, *Le tapisseries tournaisiennes de la Guerre de Troie*, Brussels 1972; J. Lestocquoy, *Deux siècles de l'histoire de la tapisserie (1300–1500): Paris, Arras, Lille, Tournai, Bruxelles*, Arras 1978, pp. 71–75; S. McKendrick, “‘The Great History of Troy’: A reassessment of the development of a secular theme in medieval art,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 54, 1991, pp. 43–82; S. McKendrick, “Grenier, Pasquier,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 13, s.v.; *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, vol. 3, pp. 226–227. **Production in Oudenaarde:** H. Kaptein, *De Hollandse textielnijverheid 1350–1600. Conjunctuur & continuïteit*, Hilversum 1998; M. Vanwelden, *Productie van wandtapijten in de regio Oudenaarde. Een symbiose tussen stad en platteland (15^{de} tot 17^{de} eeuw)*, Leuven 2006. **Patrons (patroenen) and petits patrons as tapestry designs:** T. Kane, *The Troyes Mémoire: The Making of a Medieval Tapestry*, Woodbridge 2010. For the term *patroonwerckere* (patrons maker) see E. Duverger, “Brusselse patroonschilders uit de XIV^e en de XV^e eeuw,” in: *De bloeitijd van de vlaamse tapijtkunst*, (Internationaal Colloquium Brussel 1961), Brussels 1969, pp. 220 and 224.

Large-scale tapestries belonging to the Dukes of Burgundy are described in inventories, or survive in rare examples or copies, based on the same cartoons but for different patrons. *Credo*, woven in 1388 in the Parisian workshop of Pierre de Beaumetz and Jacques Dourdin, measured 4.8 x 26.4m; the copy or the *Nine Famous Knights and Nine Virtuous Virgins* was similarly huge in scale: 4.8 x 24m. Sets of various tapestries also existed. For instance, the *Apocalypse* commissioned in 1387, likely under the influence of the great *Apocalypse from Angers* for Louis I of Anjou, as its replica, was formed of six pieces measuring 108m² each, which amounts to a surface area of 648m², which when displayed in a row would stretch for more than 60m. In turn, the *Battle of Roosebeke* (1384–386), shown in three tapestries, measured 4.9 x 39.2m in total. The large cycle of the *History of Gideon*, was commissioned by Philip the Good in 1448/1449. Designed by Baudouin de Bailleul from Arras, it was woven between 1450 and 1452 in Tournai in workshops supervised by the two merchants-entrepreneurs, Robert Dary and Jehan de l’Ortie (Lorties). It cost an astronomical sum: 8960 golden *écus* were paid to the weavers and 300 to the author of the cartoons. The tapestries themselves measured c. 100m in length and 6m in height, but were destroyed in 1794.²²⁰ These tapestries were designed as a decoration that would hang during the meetings of the chapter of the knights of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Their subject matter related to crusades to the Holy Land undertaken to retrieve holy relics; they surely represented key moments in Gideon’s history: the miracle of the fleece and the victorious battle with Midianites.²²¹ Similarly monumental were the series woven in the workshop of Pasquier Grenier in Tournai: the *History of Alexander the Great* (1459), *The Passion* (1461), the *History of Esther* (1462), and the *Triumph of Caesar* (1469–1470). From these works the *History of Alexander the Great* and *The Passion* were very

220 J. Lestocquoy, “L’Atelier de Baudouin de Bailleul et la tapisserie de Gédéon,” *Revue Belge d’archéologie et d’histoire de l’art* VIII, 1938, pp. 119–37; S. McKendrick, “Baudouin (Bauduin) de Bailleul,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 3, s.v.

221 J.Ch. Smith, “Portable Propaganda – Tapestries as Princely Metaphors at the Courts of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold,” *The Art Journal* XLVIII, 1989, pp. 123–129; A.H. van Buren, “Images monumentales de la Toison d’Or aux murs du château de Hesdin et en tapisserie,” in: *L’ordre de la Toison d’Or de Philippe Le Bon à Philippe Le Beau (1430–1505): idéal ou reflet d’une société?*, ed. P. Cockshaw, C. Van den Bergen-Pantens, exh.cat., Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Brussels, Turnhout 1996, pp. 226–235.

valuable, as large-scale tapestries woven with silver and golden threads (the first series including six items cost 5000 golden franks). Subsequently, for the next Burgundian Duke, Charles the Bold, Grenier prepared a series of eleven tapestries showing the *Trojan War*. Its total length was approximately one hundred meters, commissioned by the Bruges magistrate as a gift to the sovereign (payments were made from 1471–1476). Out of those tapestries made by Grenier only a few have survived: two from the series of the *History of Alexander the Great*, now in the Galleria Doria Pamphilj in Rome; two from the series of the *Swan Knight* – in Wawel Castle in Cracow²²² and in the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna; two from the *Passion* series are in the Vatican Museums and in the Musées Royaux in Brussels; finally, fragments of the *Seven Sacraments* may be found in the Metropolitan Museum in New York and in the Burrell Collection in Glasgow. With the series of the *Trojan War* for Charles the Bold are linked tapestries surviving in the Cathedral in Zamora (Castile), the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, the Museum of Fine Arts in Montreal, the Worcester Art Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, which are free replicas of the original commission, created c. 1475–1490 in the workshop of Pasquier's son, Jehan (Jean), for subsequent clients [fig. 340].

222 M. Piwocka, "Arras z historią Rycerza z łabędziem," *Studia do dziejów Wawelu* III, 1968, pp. 295–334.



Fig. 340: Workshop of Pasquier and Jehan Grenier, *The Battle with the Sagittary and the Conference at Achilles*, tapestry from the series of the *Trojan War*, c. 1475-1490, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1952, 52.69

The Burgundian ducal tapestries were preserved in deposits in Arras, under the watchful care of specialised ‘custodians’. From this site, at the demand of the ruler, the tapestries were sent to the locations where they were to be displayed. As a part of political propaganda they were displayed in various sites. The *History of Gideon* decorated meetings of the chapter of the Order of the Golden Fleece, which took place in Lille, Bruges and other cities. According to the account of Niccolò Frigio, a Lombardian envoy in the Netherlands, during the meeting of the chapter in Brussels in 1501 the aisle of the church was decorated by the tapestries from the series of the *History of the Trojan War*. In the presbytery, the *Passion* series was displayed; in the banquet rooms the *History of Gideon* was shown, and in the meeting hall of the chapter the tapestries embroidered with the history of Constantine

and tapestries with the history of Alexander the Great were displayed.²²³ During the peace negotiations in Arras (1422) the banquet hall was decorated with the tapestry of John the Fearless, showing his victory at Liège, as a reminder to his opponents, so as to encourage negotiations profitable for Burgundy. During the famous Feast of the Pheasant in 1454 in Lille *The Labours of Hercules* decorated the walls of the banquet hall, bringing to mind the greatness of the ducal family, which, as described by Olivier de La Marche, descended from Hercules himself, and from other ancient heroes and knights. During the coronation and the ceremonial passage of Louis XI through Paris (1461), the Burgundian duke Philip the Good – the competitor of the French king – hung in his Parisian residence, Hôtel d'Artois, with the cycles of the *History of Gideon* and the *History of Alexander the Great*, to remind viewers of his chivalric virtues and monarchical aspirations. During the wedding of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York in Bruges in 1468 the ducal residence was hung with the tapestries of the *History of Gideon*, *History of Clovis*, *History of Esther and Ahasuerus*, and the *History of Lucretia*. They all showed archetypal models for the duke (King Clovis, Gideon, the military commander, and King Ahasuerus). For the duchess they recalled the purity of Lucretia and the wisdom of Esther, as well as alluding to the ideals of the knights fighting for the relics of the True Cross (Gideon), and promoting Charles's hopes of building an empire and becoming a monarch. During the festive audience for the Ghent patrician delegates in 1469, the hall in his Brussels residence was decorated with 'costly tapestries with the great king Alexander, Hannibal, and ancient virtuous men'. The party, which, following the fall of the Ghent uprising, came to plead for the Duke's mercy and magnanimity (*clementia*), was instructed through the tapestries of the power and royalty of the Burgundian dynasty: its military power was equal to that of famous antique leaders. At times series of tapestries were commissioned for specific interiors. The space, in which hung the history of Alexander the Great by Pasquier Grenier for Philip the Good in 1459 was described as *une chambre de tapiserie de l'histoire d'Alexandre* – a chamber of tapestries of the history of Alexander (two contemporary replicas survive in the Galleria Doria Pamphilj in Rome). For his throne hall, Charles the Bold commissioned tapestries with the *History of Caesar* (c. 1469–1470, Bern, Historisches Museum), inspired by the apologia of himself written by Jean Molinet in a literary text on Nine Heroes (1467), which likened Charles to Julius Caesar, and by the 'living pictures' with scenes from *Les Faits de Romains* ('The Deeds of the Romans'), put on during the triumphal entry of the Duke to Arras in 1468.

223 S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 90.

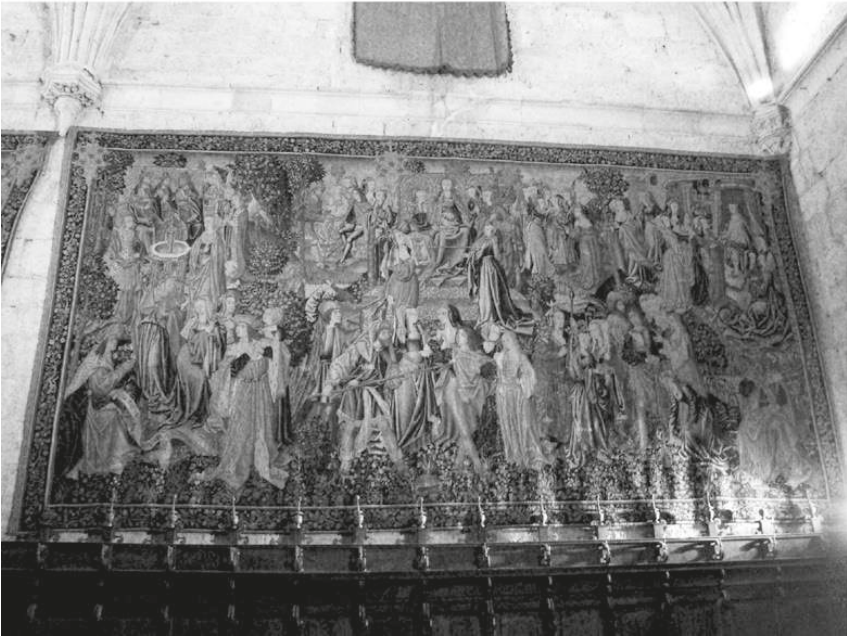


Fig. 341: Workshop from Brussels, Tapestries from the series *History of the Salvation of Mankind*, commissioned by Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, c. 1505–1515, Palencia Cathedral



Fig. 342: Workshop from Brussels, Tapestry from the series *History of the Redemption Mankind* for Burgos Cathedral, commissioned by Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, c. 1514–1524 (before 1526), New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher and Rogers Funds, 1938, 38.28

Folded and unfolded at their owners' wish, the tapestries travelled from castle to castle, to be displayed on the walls of various residences. Dukes and dignitaries, bishops and canons, also commissioned them as pious gifts to churches; in this case they were displayed in the choir. Since they were typically large-scale objects, they had to be folded during the hanging, embracing the pillars and protruding elements of the wall, or concavely filling the angles of the chamber. Such a mode of display of the cycle of tapestries is depicted in the famous illumination *January* by the Limburg brothers, which shows the feast following the hunt at the court of Duke Jean de Berry, placed in the calendar of the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* (Chantilly, Musée Condé, ms. 65, fol. 2v). It includes tapestries with the history of the Trojan War, which hung on all the walls and were folded to decorate the corners of the room. The draperies in the choir were not permanently displayed in the presbytery. They were stored folded in the treasury or sacristy and only unfolded and hung during feast days. This practice of unfolding the tapestries is described in a document of 1509 from Le Mans Cathedral, in which the canon Martin Guerande donated a set of tapestries: 'the said tapestries are to be unfolded, hung and displayed in the choir stalls, behind the canons' seats, on specific feast days.'²²⁴ The tapestries were

224 L. Weigert, *Weaving Sacred Stories: French Choir Tapestries and the Performance of Clerical Identity*, Ithaca 2004, pp. 55 and 201.

commissioned by Cardinal Jean Rolin, the son of the famous Nicolas, for the choir of the parish church of Notre Dame in Beaune. They were designed in 1474, presumably by Pierre Spicre, and woven c. 1500 at the expense of the canon Hugues Le Cocq in a northern Netherlandish workshop. In the way they are displayed today they recall a festive, special act of presentation in the space of the liturgical choir, above (the later) stalls [fig. 15]. Similarly, the set of four Flemish tapestries in the Cathedral in Palencia, displayed today in the chapter house, shows the allegory of the *History of the Salvation of Mankind*. The set was created in Brussels c. 1505–1515, financed by Bishop Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca [fig. 341], who also commissioned analogous tapestries for the Cathedral in Burgos, today preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York [fig. 342].²²⁵



Fig. 343: Jean Boudolf, Nicolas Bataille, Robert Poinçon, *Angers Apocalypse*, series of tapestries, 1373–1382, Château d'Angers

225 Flemish tapestries in the Cathedral in Palencia: G. Ramos de Castro, L. Iglesias Rouco, *Memorias y esplendores*, exh. cat., Catedral de San Antolín of Palencia, (seria Las Edades del Hombre VII), Palencia 1999.



Fig. 344: Jean Boudolf, Nicolas Bataille, Robert Poinçon, *Angers Apocalypse*, series of tapestries, 1373–1382, Château d’Angers

We know that the tapestries were hung also on the exteriors of buildings, on fresh air. This was the case with the famous series the *Angers Apocalypse*, commissioned by Louis I of Anjou in 1373 and preserved in the family castle in Angers (Château d’Angers, Collection Tapisseries),²²⁶ executed following Jean Boudolf’s designs in the Parisian workshops of

226 *The Apocalypse cycle of tapestries from Angers*: R. Planchenault, *L’Apocalypse d’Angers*, Paris 1966; D. King, “How Many Apocalypse Tapestries?” in: *Studies in Textile History in Memory of Harold B. Burnham*, Toronto 1977, pp. 160–167; F. Joubert, “L’Apocalypse d’Angers et les débuts de la tapisserie historiée,” *Bulletin monumental* CXXXIX, 1981, pp. 101–110; C. Giraud-Labalte, *La tapisserie de l’Apocalypse*, collection catalogue, Château d’Angers, Angers 1981; M. Auzas et al., *L’Apocalypse d’Angers: Chef-d’oeuvre de la tapisserie médiévale*, Fribourg 1985; F. Muel et al., *Lenvers & l’endroit. La Tenture de l’Apocalypse d’Angers*, (Inventaire Général des Monuments et des Richesses Artistiques de la France IV), Nantes 1990 (2nd edition 1996); “L’Apocalypse d’Angers,” *Dossier de l’art* 31, 1996; F. Joubert, “Création à deux mains: l’élaboration de la tenture de l’Apocalypse d’Angers,” *Revue de l’art* 114, 1996, pp. 48–56; *Regards sur la tapisserie* (Association des conservateurs des antiquités et objets d’art de France),

the entrepreneurs and craftsmen, Nicolas Bataille and Robert Poinçon (Poisson) [figs. 343–344]. The series consisted originally of six pieces, measuring over 23 meters in length and over 4.5 meters in height, and the total length of the set amounted to over 130 meters, with 84 episodes from the *Revelation* of St. John. They were too large for the decoration of the chapel in Angers and probably also for the hall in the castle. However, we know that they were displayed during the wedding ceremony of the son of Louis I, the new duke Louis II of Anjou who married Yolande of Aragon in Arles in 1400; the tapestries were sent there from Angers, and were hung in the courtyard of the archbishop's palace. Even today historic tapestries are displayed on special occasions on building facades and in the streets, for instance in Toledo in Spain, during the annual Corpus Christi procession.

From what was mentioned above it seems clear that tapestries – though gigantic and precious, acquired at a great expense and produced in a laborious fashion – were not intended to be displayed continuously, flat on the wall. This is however the mode of display to which we are accustomed in newly arranged church treasuries and new museums. But it seems that this is an incorrect means of presenting these draperies.

We do not know the original mode of display of the celebrated cycle of the *Lady with the Unicorn*, in the Musée du Moyen-Âge of the Hôtel de Cluny in Paris [figs. 345–348]²²⁷ – until recently displayed in a rotunda, to evoke

ed. by G. Massin-Le Goff, É. Vacquet, Paris 2002; Ph. Abadie, “L’agneau et le dragon. L’univers symbolique de l’apocalypse johannique et sa représentation dans la Tenture d’Angers,” in: *L’imaginaire des apocalypses*, Paris 2003, pp. 55–88; M. Manion, “The Angers Tapestries of the Apocalypse and Valois patronage,” in: *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom*, ed. N.J. Morgan, (symposium, Harlaxton 2000), Stamford 2004, pp. 220–238; L. Delwasse, *La tenture de l’Apocalypse d’Angers*, (Centre des Monuments Nationaux), Paris 2007; Ch. de Mérimond, “La tenture de l’Apocalypse d’Angers: une hypothèse à propos de l’absence d’envers,” *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France*, 2008 (2015), pp. 48–57; N.F.H. O’Hear, *Contrasting images of the Book of Revelation in late medieval and early modern art: a case study in visual exegesis*, Oxford 2011, pp. 43–68; A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. 1, chapter V.3 and V.3.3; F. Dravet, “L’image du féminin. Un des monstres catastrophiques. Réflexions à partir de la tenture de l’Apocalypse d’Angers,” in: *L’imaginaire de la catastrophe dans la communication et les arts*, ed. by A. da Silva, F. Dravet, G. de Freitas, G. de Castro, Paris 2018, pp. 123–141; L. Angelino, *L’arazzo dell’apocalisse di Angers. Una testimonianza tra cielo e terra*, Brescia 2020.

227 The cycles of tapestries with the *Lady with the Unicorn* (Paryż, Musée National du Moyen-Âge, Hôtel de Cluny): A. Erlande-Brandenburg, *La Dame à la*

licorne, Paris 1979; G. Souchal, “‘Messeigneurs les Vistes’ et la ‘Dame à la licorne,’” *Bibliothèque de l’École des Chartes* 141, 1983, pp. 209–267; J.-B. de Vaivre, “Messire Jehan Le Viste, chevalier, seigneur d’Arcy, et sa tenture au lion et à la licorne,” *Bulletin Monumental* 142, 1984, no. 4, pp. 397–434; A. Nilsén, “The Lady with the Unicorn: On earthly desire and spiritual purity,” in: *Icon to Cartoon: A Tribute to Sixten Ringbom*, Stockholm 1995, pp. 213–235; G. Büttner, *Die Dame mit dem Einhorn. Die Teppiche des Musée de Cluny. Bilder der seelischen Entwicklung*, Stuttgart 1996; M. Monsour, “The Lady with the Unicorn,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 141, 1999, no. 1571, pp. 237–254; S. Lyall, M. Darton, *The Lady and the Unicorn*, London 2000; M.-E. Bruel, “La tapisserie de la Dame à la Licorne, une représentation des vertus allégoriques du Roman de la Rose de Guillaume de Lorris,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Déc. 2000, pp. 215–232; A. Nilsén, *The Lady with the Unicorn – a Lady of Her Time*, Stockholm 2004; É. Taburet-Delahaye, *La Dame à la licorne*, Paris 2007, 2nd edition Paris 2010; C. Decu Teodorescu, *La Tenture de la Dame à la Licorne. Nouvelle lecture des armoiries*, “Bulletin monumental” 168, 2010, no. 4, pp. 355–367; K.I. Sowley, *The Lady and the Unicorn tapestry: femininity, desire and allegory / Autour de la tenture de La Dame à la Licorne. Féminité, désir, allégorie*, dissertation, University of Strasbourg 2012; M. Pastoureau, É. Delahaye, *Les secrets de la licorne*, Musée de Cluny, Paris 2013; J.-B. de Vaivre, “Autour de la Dame à la licorne et d’autres tentures: I. Antoine II Le Viste, ses parents et alliés,” *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot*, 93, 2014, pp. 65–128; his, “Autour de la Dame à la licorne et d’autres tentures: II. Notes de méthodologie et études comparatives,” *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot*, 94, 2015, pp. 89–200; K.I. Sowley, “La femme, symbole de l’homme. La tenture de la ‘Dame à la licorne’ et le rôle de la figure féminine dans la représentation du statut social,” in: *Arachné. Un regard critique sur l’histoire de la tapisserie*, ed. by P.-F. Bertrand, A. Nassieu Maupas, Rennes 2017, pp. 15–37; É. Taburet-Delahaye, B. de Chancel-Bardelot, *La Dame à la licorne*, Paris 2018; P. Foutakis (Panagiōtēs Phutakēs), *De “La Dame à la licorne” et de “son” désir*, Paris 2019. Cf. also the cycle *The Unicorn Hunt* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art): M.B. Freeman, *The Unicorn Tapestries*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, New York 1976; *The Unicorn Tapestries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. A.S. Cavallo, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1998; Th. Tolley, *Master of the Unicorn Hunt, [Maître de la Chasse à la Licorne; Master of the Cloisters Unicorn; Master of Anne of Brittany]*, in: *Dictionary of Art*, s.v. **For the myth and iconography of the unicorn** – see for instance: N. Hathaway, *The Unicorn*, New York 1984; *Les mystères de la dame à la licorne*, (conference, Paris 2007), ed. P. Lasalle, Paris 2008; Ch. Lavers, *The Natural History of Unicorns*, London 2010 (in German: *Das Einhorn. Natur, Mythos, Geschichte*, Darmstadt 2010); M. Backes, “The hunt for the unicorn: ambivalent representations of a mythical figure in text and image,” *Riggisberger Berichte*, 23, 2019, pp.108–116.

the bent surface.²²⁸ These tapestries have relatively large dimensions: they measure between 3.11 and 3.77 meters in height and between 2.90 and 4.73 meters in width. The allegorical cycle – showing the Five Senses or, according to Marie-Elisabeth Bruel, the personification of the courtly virtues as described in *Roman de la Rose* by Guillaume de Lorris: *Oiseuse, Richesse, Franchise, Liesse, Beauté* – was closed or opened by the sixth tapestry which included an inscription [À] *Mon seul désir* [‘Only my desire’ or ‘Following my desire, according to my will’], framed by the initials A and I. Stylistically the tapestries are close to the work of the Master of Anne of Brittany (a painter identified with Jean d’Ypres, who died in 1508, or his brother Louis).²²⁹ They were executed in a Flemish workshop between 1484 and 1500 or slightly later, between 1493 and 1510, for, as demonstrated by the coat-of-arms, the member of de Viste family. In all likelihood, it was Jean (Jehan) IV Le Viste, born in Lyon, counsellor of the city of Paris, and the chairman of the Cour des Aides from 1484, who died in 1500. However, the colours of the arms do not correspond to the heraldic colour scheme of Jean la Viste. Recently, Carmen Decu Teodorescu has identified the patron as being Antoine II Le Viste (died 1534) from the extended family line, an uncle’s nephew of Jean IV Le Viste, the possessor of his father’s fortune from 1493, a high official of the Chancellery from 1500, who in 1510 married Jacqueline Raguier (the tapestries could be a wedding present or a gift to the bride-to-be). He was a man who had a successful career during the reign of Louis XII and François I. The same coat-of-arms is included in the rose window of the southern transept in the church of Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois in Paris, commissioned by Antoine La Viste in 1532.

228 Currently inside a space with a rectangular plan– see: É. Taburet-Delahaye, “Une nouvelle salle pour La Dame à la Licorne,” *Revue des musées de France / Revue du Louvre*, 54, 2014, no. 1, pp. 7–10.

229 *Primitifs français. Découvertes et redécouvertes*, eds. D. Thiébaud, Ph. Lorentz, F.-R. Martin, exh. cat., Musée du Louvre, Paris 2004.



Fig. 345: Workshop from the Southern Netherlands, design: Parisian Painter (Jean Perréal?, Jean d'Ypres?, Master of Anne of Brittany?), "À mon seul désir" – *Lady Refuses to Accept a Necklace*, one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn*, executed for Jean or Antoine Le Viste, c. 1484–1500, Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge (Hôtel de Cluny)



Fig. 346: *Taste (Honesty?)* – one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn*

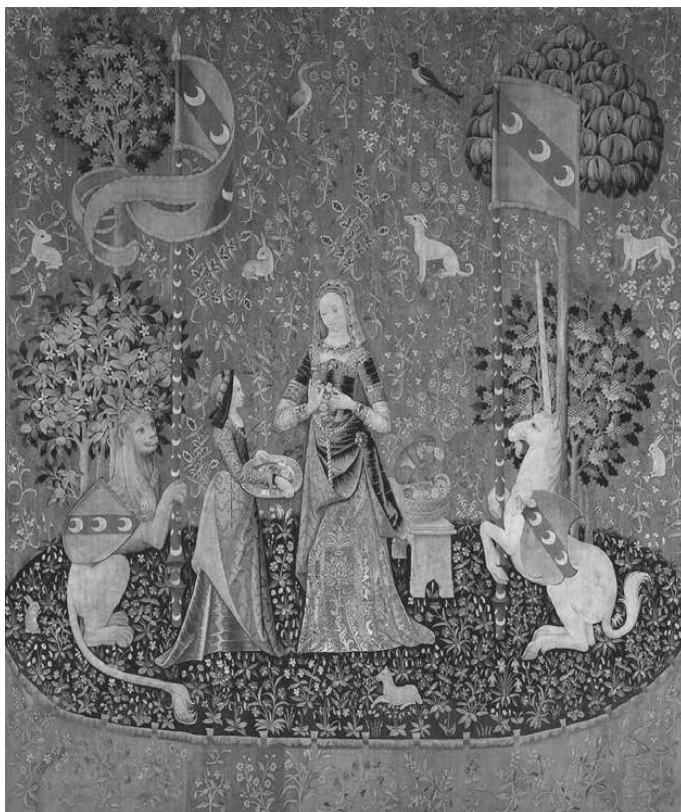


Fig. 347: *Smell (Beauty?)* – one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn*



Fig. 348: *Touch (Abundance?)* – one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn*

Whoever commissioned the tapestries was named Le Viste and belonged to a young dynasty. Viste means ‘Sight’ and presumably that is why the iconography is linked to the senses. A dynasty that had recently come to power required a suitable heraldry. Jan Białostocki described the message conveyed by the set in this way: “The six tapestries [...] establish a highly formalised allegory of the Virtue. [...] Five works show an allegorical figure of a lady between a lion and a unicorn, with the attributes of a knight (in an overly ostentatious manner, because the patron, who had been recently accepted into the knighthood, clearly assumed the position of the *nouveau riche*). These include lances with banners decorated with three moon crescents – the coat-of-arms of Le Viste. The ladies depicted in the centre are personifications of the five senses – a theme that became increasingly popular in subsequent centuries. The sixth tapestry was intended as an opening or closure of the series. It shows a lady in the entrance to a tent, in

the moment of putting her necklace into a box, which is held for her by her assistant. On the tent there is an inscription *À mon seul désir* (On my demand). In other words: the way in which he/she will use his/her senses depends on the human will. Another set of tapestries, now lost, but known to us from various descriptions, which belonged to the Cardinal Erard de la Marck, the duke and bishop of Liège, also showed the five senses and an allegory with inscription *liberum arbitrum*, so similarly expressing the idea of the free will of men, who should choose wisely and avoid having their minds distracted by the senses.”²³⁰ This account of moral, heraldic imagery that glorified the lineage of its owners had to have been presented through the hanging of the draperies in a large hall in the Le Viste house, or in various subsequent rooms. Surely, they were not displayed there permanently but only on special occasions.

III.2.4. Veiling and wrapping

Many fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century works of art were kept in various cases and protective pouches, and taken out only occasionally. For instance: a gilded and silver iron chest decorated with a stylised Muslim ornament, which is now in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich was probably intended for liturgical books. As manifested by the coat-of-arms attached to its side wall, it belonged to the Burgundian duke Charles the Bold.²³¹

The described above *libretti* of Charles V, Louis of Anjou and Philip the Bold (see chapter III.1.2, fig. 165) were stored in cases, similar to the one described in an archival source from 1420/1421, made of leather for the Philip the Good.²³² It was in such pouches that kings and dukes of the Valois dynasty carried their reliquaries in the form of the *libretto* to war, treating them as amulets.

Prayer beads and rosary ‘nuts’ were kept in boxes and cases. The example from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, made c. 1510–1515 executed by the workshop Adam Dirksz. (Adam Theodrici) for Eewert Jansz. van Bleiswick of Delft, was permanently placed in a copper case, and inserted into a customised pouch of red velvet.²³³ Another prayer bead by Adam Dirksz.’s workshop, from the same museum, in a silver shell, was kept in a chest with

230 J. Białostocki, *Sztuka XV wieku od Parlerów do Dürera*, p. 307.

231 *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, cat. no. 125.

232 Lille, Archive du Département du Nord, B. 1923, year 1420/1421; cf. S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, p. 232.

233 F. Scholten, R.L. Falkenburg, *A Sense of Heaven: 16th century boxwood carvings for private devotion*, Warburg Institute, London – Henry Moore Institute,

drawers; both protective layers are now in the Rijksmuseum collection [figs. 173–174]. The beads were taken out during meditative prayer, and, as one can assume, individual parts of their complex construction were playfully, but prayerfully, opened and disassembled.

Similarly, diptychs and small triptychs could be kept in special pouches, such as the *Matheron Diptych*, presumably the gift of King René of Anjou and the Queen Jeanne de Laval for the dignitary at their court, Jean de Matheron. The pouch made of red velvet, with its golden lining, could have been made subsequently and was not necessarily contemporary with the diptych. However, its existence documents the practice of storing such small, portable items in various cases [fig. 265].

The *Angelic Salutation* by Veit Stoss in Nuremberg [figs. 59–61] was hung in St. Lawrence's church, suspended on a chain from the vault, and covered by drapery attached to a wooden and metal frame, which protected it from dust and candle fumes, as well as from the gaze of the viewers. The casing was installed in 1519, soon after the completion of the work (1517–1518). To unveil the sculpture, it had to be lowered on the chain towards the pavement. The famous sculpture functioned in such a way until 1529, when the town council decided to stop this practice and leave the sculpture permanently concealed.²³⁴

These situations demonstrate that the veiling, removal from cases, and revealing of these images to curious eyes were common practices at that time. These moments were not always rituals in which the sacred objects were unveiled in a ceremonial or liturgical manner in a way similar to the act of opening a winged retable, but they were always linked to the revealing of the precious item inside. This practice was characteristic of an earlier culture that gathered and collected precious items.

Leeds 1999, fig. 3; H. Tait, *Catalogue of the Waddesdon Bequest in the British Museum*, vol. I: *The Jewels*, London 1986, pp. 53–55; E. Wetter, *Zwei spätmittelalterliche Betnüsse aus den südlichen Niederlanden*, (Monographien der Abegg-Stiftung 15), Abegg-Stift, Riggisberg 2011.

234 C. Christiansen, "Iconoclasm and the Preservation of Ecclesiastical Art in Nürnberg," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 61, 1970, pp. 205–221.



Fig. 349: Castle of Emperor Charles IV in Karlstein/Karlštejn, Bohemia, c. 1348–1365

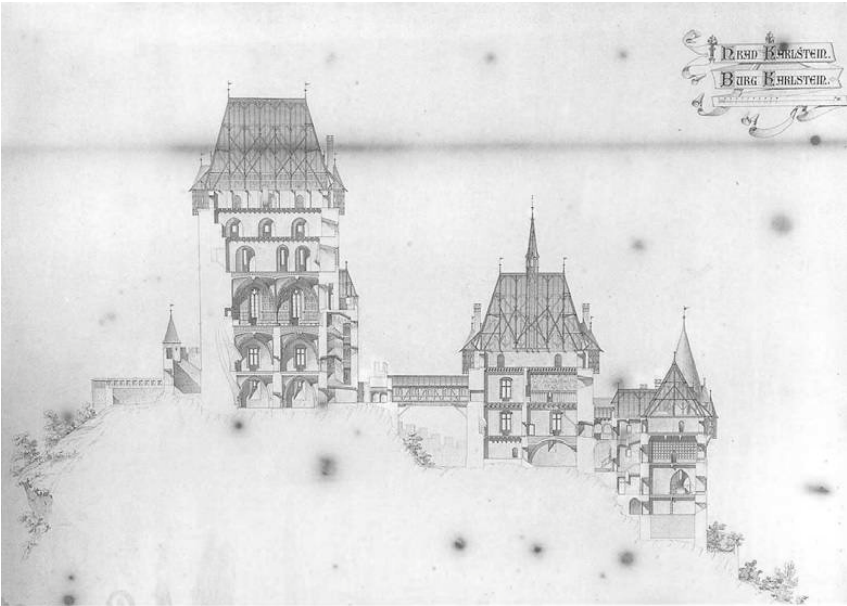


Fig. 350: Castle in Karlstein/Karlštejn, cross section of the structure, drawing by Josef Mocker from the end of the 19th century, Karlstein Castle Collection; from the right hand side: Palace (Palas), Small Tower, Great Tower

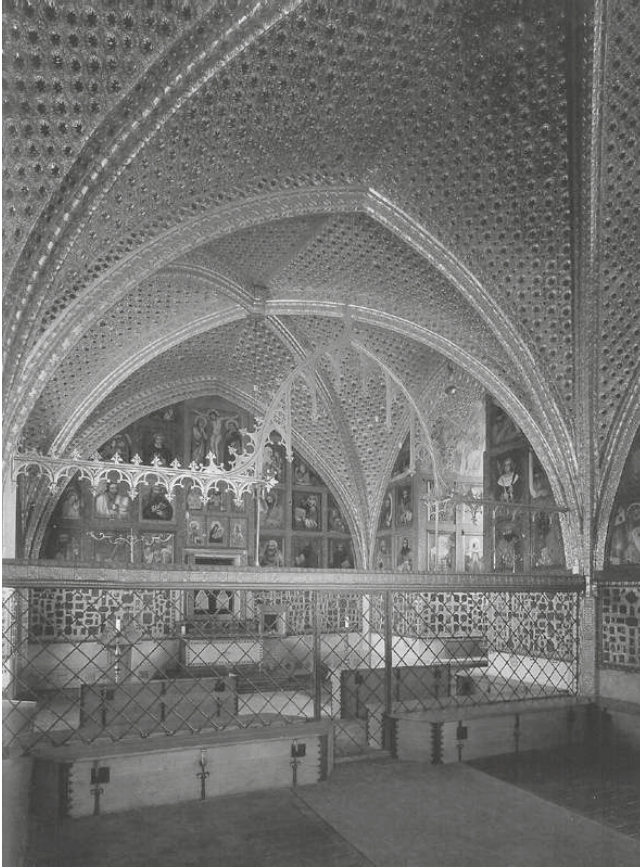


Fig. 351: Castle in Karlstein/Karlštejn, Chapel of the Holy Cross in the Great Tower, 1361/1362–1364/1365

In a way, this storing in confinement, and subsequent revealing of the precious objects is comparable to the unveiling of the content of thesauruses of relics and jewels. The rule of such thesauruses was employed, paradoxically, in the design of the huge castle of Emperor Charles IV in Karlstein, Bohemia, erected c. 1348–1365 [figs. 349–351].²³⁵ The castle was a kind of reliquary. In the centre of the structure, in the Great Tower, there is a

235 *The decoration of the Karlstein Castle: Magister Theodoricus, Court Painter of the Emperor Charles IV: Decoration of the Sacred Spaces at Castle Karlštejn Castle*, eds. J. Fajt, J. Royt, (symposium: Prague 1996), Prague 1997; *Magister*

chapel of the Holy Cross, originally named the chapel of the Passion, decorated c. 1361/1362–1364/1365, when the walls were gilded and incrustated with precious stones, relics and paintings. The chapel concealed the most precious sacred and national imperial relics: those of the Passion of Christ, of various saints and emperors, and of the imperial insignia of the Holy Roman Emperor. Relics were ubiquitous in the chapel, embedded in walls above the entrance and throughout the space: in the altar, in a grid above it and the base below it. They are also present in the lower register below the surface of the wall, decorated with one hundred and twenty-nine panel paintings by the court painter, Master Theodoric, from the third quarter of the fourteenth century. The golden surfaces of the wall, together with the paintings and precious stones, provided a frame for the relics, thus transforming the chapel into a monumental reliquary. The chapel formed a sort of case for the holy relics and for the similarly holy imperial insignia. It was a visible sign of imperial anointment. The commission document specified that access to the tower and the chapel was forbidden to all women, even married ones, and to all undesirable persons. In 1357, Charles IV established a canonical collegium to provide liturgical services in the holy place. The chapel is located on the second floor of the Great Tower, and access to it is difficult and strenuous; you reach it through steep, spiral stairs in a narrow staircase, with walls decorated with

Theodoricus, Court Painter to Emperor Charles IV: The Pictorial Decoration of the Shrines at Karlštejn Castle, ed. J. Fajt, exh. cat., Národní Galerie v Praze, Prague 1998; *Karl IV und sein Kreis*, ed. F. Seibt, Munich 1978; *Court Chapels of the High and Late Middle Ages and Their Artistic Decoration*, ed. J. Fajt, (symposium: Národní Galerie, the Convent of St. Agnes, Prague, 1998), Prague 2003; I. Rosario, *Art and Propaganda: Charles IV of Bohemia, 1346–1378*, Woodbridge 2000; B. Drake Boehm, J. Fajt, *Prague: The Crown of Bohemia, 1347–1437*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Yale University Press, New Haven 2005 (= *Charles IV: Emperor by the Grace of God; Culture and Art in the Reign of the Last of the Luxembourgs 1347–1437 / Karl IV.: Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden. Kunst und Repräsentation des Hauses Luxemburg 1310–1437 / Karel IV: Císař z Boží milosti. Kultura a umění za vlády posledních Lucemburků, 1347–1437*, Obrazárna Pražského Hradu, Praha 2006); *Kunst als Herrschaftsinstrument. Böhmen und das Heilige Römische Reich unter den Luxemburgern im europäischen Kontext*, (congress, Berlin 2006), ed. J. Fajt, A. Langer, Berlin 2009 (there in particular J. Fajt, *Karlstein revisited. Überlegungen zu den Patrizinien der Karlsteiner Sakralräumen*, pp. 250–288); M. Studničkova, “Karstein Castle as a theological metaphor,” in: *Prague and Bohemia: Medieval Art, Architecture, and Cultural Exchange in Central Europe*, ed. Z. Opačič, (symposium: Leeds 2006), Leeds 2009, pp. 168–182. P. Bareš et al., *Karlštejn a jeho význam v dějinách a kultuře*, Prague 2010; J. Royt, *Kaple svatého Kříže / The Chapel of the Holy Cross*, Karlštejn 2016.

frescoes depicting the lives of saints Wenceslas and Ludmila, the patron saints of the Kingdom of Bohemia. The walls of the chapel are very thick and the monumental doors in the dark entrance hall create a barrier preventing easy access to the 'reliquary'. Upon entering through the doors, the visitor sees the luminous hall, originally illuminated by candles and a peculiar light falling through windows with panes incrustated with semi-transparent precious stones. It was supposed to recall the Temple of Solomon and the Heavenly Jerusalem, as described in the Books of Kings (I, 6–8 and II, 2–4) and the Apocalypse (21:9–22): an edifice and a city of gold and precious stones. To access the altar, one had to cross a monumental, decorative grid, its shape resembling the imperial crown, and the Crown of Thorns. These gradual and multiple barriers – first climbing up the steep hill to access the castle, then passing through the fortifications and buildings of the palace and the Small Tower, to reach the Great Tower; the subsequent difficult access route to the chapel through the narrow staircase, the dark antechamber, and the thick iron doors, after which one was required to finally pass through the internal grid: all this amounted to the long and manifold process of accessing the treasury with its relics and insignia. At last, one was rewarded with the effect of unveiling and revealing its priceless content.



Fig. 352: Tonnerre, the hospital church of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles, access to the chapel with the Holy Sepulchre



Fig. 353: Jean Michel and Georges de la Sonnette, the Holy Sepulchre (*Saint-Sépulchre*), 1452–1454, Tonnerre, the hospital church of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles – view from above from the entrance to the chapel



Fig. 354: Jean Michel and Georges de la Sonnette, the Holy Sepulchre (*Saint-Sépulchre*), 1452–1454, Tonnerre, the hospital church of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles – frontal view

The rule of revealing through numerous veils and barriers sometimes structures the perception of large-scale sculpted monuments. The Holy Sepulchre in the hospital of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles in Tonnerre (1452–1454) [figs. 352–354], one of many *Saints Sepulchres* in France (Langres, Neufchatel, Solesmes), was commissioned by a local patrician, the wealthy merchant, Lancelot de Buronfosse. It was carved by two sculptors, the brothers Jean-Michel and Georges de la Sonnette, whose names are known to us only through archival documents (the hospital receipts from the period 1452–1454).²³⁶ The monument was not placed in the church to be viewed by wide audiences, but is in the chapel at the end of the hospital, by its eastern end. To see it one has to first open small doors and descend nine steps to an area below the hospital's pavement, into a dark space, illuminated by a single window. There, on the

236 **The Holy Sepulchre in Tonnerre:** W.H. Forsyth, *The Entombment of Christ: French Sculpture of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1970, pp. 65–69; M. Martin, *La statuaire de la Mise au Tombeau du Christ des XV^e et XVI^e siècles en Europe occidentale*, Paris 1997, pp. 56–57 and 218–220; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 250–252; B. Kurmann-Schwarz, “Des œuvres d’art commanditées pour un hôpital: l’exemple de Notre-Dame des Fontenilles à Tonnerre,” in: *Hospitaler in Mittelalter und Fruherer Neizeit / Hopituax au Moyen-Age et aux temps modernes*, ed. G. Drossbach, Berlin 2007, pp. 188–189.

side, by a wall is located the Holy Sepulchre. Initially, through the open doors the viewer sees only the single figure of St. Nicodemus, and when one goes down gradually, he/she discovers other silhouettes, before finally standing in the middle of the chapel. Once there, they can grasp the entire composition from the front and focus on the adoration of the image of the body of Christ, on the stone substitute of the most holy 'relic' – the eucharistic Corpus Christi.



Fig. 355: Master from Lower Saxony from the circle of Conrad von Soest, and Lower Rhine Master from the circle of the Master from Sankt Lorenz, *Golden Panel*, c. 1418–1420, Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum – panels of the closed polyptych



Fig. 356: *Golden Panel* – panels of the polyptych as seen in the first opening (with external wings opened)

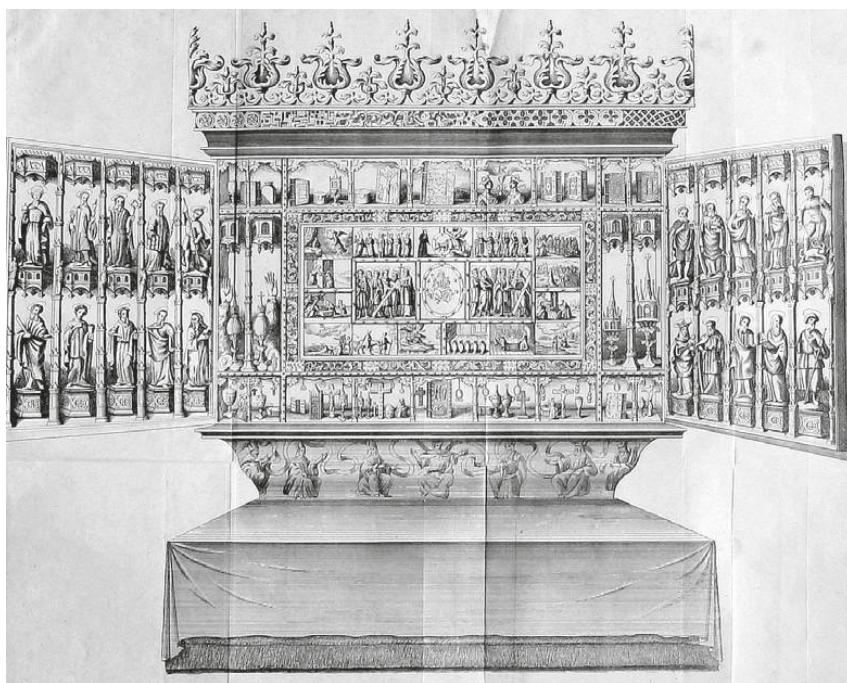


Fig. 357: *Golden Panel* – fully opened polyptych (with external and internal wings opened) – engraving by Johann Christoph Böcklin after a drawing by L. A. Gebhard, in Sigismund Hosmann, *Fürtreffliches Denck-Mahl der Göttlichen Regierung...*, Celle 1700

The concealing of relics and their unveiling on special occasions justified a peculiar format of retables – winged reliquary altarpieces.²³⁷ They provide a kind of analogy for the chapel in Karlstein. The function was originally fulfilled by the so-called *Golden Panel* from Hannover (Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum) c. 1418–1420 [figs. 355–357].²³⁸ Preserved until today, the two pairs of the large-scale painted wings, (seen when the external

237 **The winged reliquary altarpieces:** H. Keller, “Der Flügelaltar als Reliquenschrein,” in: *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Plastik. Festschrift Theodor Müller zum 19. April 1965*, Munich 1965, pp. 125–144.

238 **Golden Panel in Hannover:** M. Wolfson, *Die deutschen und niederländischen Gemälde bis 1550*, collection catalogue, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Landesgalerie, Hannover 1992, cat. no. 39 (with further bibliography). B. Hartwig, “The ‘Goldene Tafel’ from Lüneburg, c. 1420: new findings about painting process and characteristics,” in: *Technical studies of paintings: problems of attribution (15th–17th centuries)*, ed. by A. Dubois, J. Couvert, T.-H.

doors are closed), depict the Brazen Serpent and the Crucifixion. In its first opening thirty-six sections, nine on each panel, with the detailed cycles from the lives of Christ and the Virgin, are shown. The wings framed the main chest, which measured 231 x 370cm and held a reliquary inside, that included twenty-two cases with eighty-eight holy relics (the remaining fragments are now in Kestner-Museum and Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum in Hannover). The large reliquary was made of solid gold, hence the name of the retable – *Goldene Tafel*. It was executed c. 1170 and decorated with a relief panel with *Maiestas Domini* in the centre and figures of the Apostles at the sides. It was an antependium for a Benedictine church in the Monastery of St. Michael in Lünenburg, which remained under the command of the Billung dukes from Lower Saxony, and later the Welf, becoming their burial place. In 1376, the expansion of the church was undertaken and soon the *Golden Panel* was embedded in the chest of the new reliquary, winged altarpiece. Thus, the procedure of covering and unveiling the priceless relics of Christ was initiated to highlight the religious and political splendour of the two ducal dynasties simultaneously.

III.2.5. Prints on the move: *Einblattgraphik* and print series

Prints were the most mobile artform (meaning the most widely circulating), and exerted the greatest influence of all fifteenth-century art.²³⁹ However, the commonly accepted hypothesis that printmaking was the first mass

Borchert, Paris – Leuven – Bristol 2018, pp. 160–176; *Zeitenwende 1400. Die Goldene Tafel als europäisches Meisterwerk*, ed. by A.-F. Köllermann, Petersberg 2019; K. Kracht, “Der schwingungs isolierte Sockel der Goldenen Tafel im Landesmuseum Hannover,” *Restauro*, 2020, no 1, pp. 38–43.

239 Northern print in fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries – main catalogues: W.L. Schreiber, *Handbuch der Holz- und Metallschnitte des XV. Jahrhunderts*, 8 vols., Berlin 1926–1930; M. Geisberg, *Der deutsche Einblatt-Holzschnitt in der ersten Hälfte des XVI. Jahrhundert*, 37 vols, Munich 1923–1930 (new edition: *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1500–1550*, ed. W.L. Strauss, New York 1974); P. Heitz, *Einblattdrucke des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 100 t., Straßburg 1899–1942; M. Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, 9 vols., Vienna 1908–1938; F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700*, 71 vols., Amsterdam–Rotterdam 1949–2010, vol. 12: *Masters and Monogrammists of the 15th century*, Amsterdam 1956; *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vols. 23: *German and Netherlandish Masterem of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century*, ed. M. Wolff, New York 1985. **Production and function of print in the fifteenth**

century – best summary of the problem in: S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 11: *Printmakers in the Rhine Valley Inventing, Marketing, and Distributing Images*, pp. 129–141. See also: D. Landau, P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470–1550*, New Haven–London 1994; *Einblattdrucke des 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts. Probleme, Perspektiven, Fallstudien*, eds. V. Honemann, S. Griese, F. Eisermann, M. Ostermann, Tübingen 2000. **Printmaking techniques in the fifteenth century**: E. Rebel, “Die Entwicklung der graphischen Techniken im 15. Jahrhundert,” *Kusthistorische Arbeitsblätter* 3, 1999, pp. 45–58. For drypoint see: J.P. Filedt Kok, “The Development of Fifteenth-Century German Engraving and the Drypoint Prints of the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet,” in: J.P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life: the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet or the Housebook Master, ca. 1470–1500*, exh. cat., Rijksprentenkabinet / Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Maarssen 1985, pp. 23–39. **Woodcut** – best monographs: *The Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*, eds. P. Parshall, R. Schoch, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington – Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, Yale University Press, New Haven 2005; *The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, ed. P. Parshall, (symposium: The National Gallery of Art, Washington 2005; *Studies in the history of art* 75), The National Gallery of Art, Washington – Yale University Press, New Haven 2009 (including, for instance: P. Needham, *Prints in the Early Printing Shops*; N.F. Palmer, *Woodcuts for Reading: The Codicology of Fifteenth-century Blockbooks and Woodcut Cycles*; D.S. Areford, *Multiplying the Sacred: The Fifteenth-century Woodcut as Reproduction, Surrogate, Simulation*; J.F. Hamburger, “In gebeden vnd in bilden geschriben”: *Prints as Exemplars of Piety and the Culture of the Copy in Fifteenth-century Germany*; P. Schmidt, *The Early Print and the Origins of the Picture Postcard*; U. Weekes, *Convents as Patrons and Producers of Woodcuts in the Low Countries around 1500*; D. Oltrogge, *Illuminating the Print: The Use of Color in Fifteenth-century Prints and Book Illumination*). **Engraving**: the best Polish survey: J. Sikorska, “Miedzioryt XV wieku i jego odrębność w sztuce późnego średniowiecza. Problemy badawcze,” *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 70, 2008, pp. 113–139. See also: B. Welzel, “Niederländische Kupferstiche des 15. Jahrhunderts,” in: *Die Kunst der burgundischen Niederlande...*, pp. 211–227; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 11: *Printmakers in the Rhine Valley Inventing, Marketing, and Distributing Images*, pp. 129–141; D.S. Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe*, Farnham 2010 (new edition 2016); A. Stijnman, *Engraving and etching 1400–2000: a history of the development of manual intaglio printmaking processes*, London 2012; V. Birke, *Die Geschichte der Radierung von 1500–1700*, Petersberg 2018. **Etching**: Ch. Metzger, “The Iron Age: the beginnings of etching about 1500,” in: *The Renaissance of Etching*, ed. by C. Jenkins, N.M. Orenstein, F. Spira, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York – Albertina, Vienna, 2019–2020, New Haven – London 2019, pp. 25–63.

medium is incorrect.²⁴⁰ In fact, prints were elite and connoisseurial products, and their character was not necessarily reproductive and did not provide models for other artistic disciplines. Prints were most frequently independent works of art, and only rarely functioned as folios for pattern books for sculptors or goldsmiths. The famous *Censer* – an engraving by Martin Schongauer – could have been such a pattern drawing for the making of the actual object in metal, as documented by the censer from Edam (today Haarlem, Archbishop’s Palace), a work by a northern Netherlandish master from the early sixteenth century [figs. 358–359]. However, it could have also been a preparatory study for a painting, documenting an actual, existing censer, or operated as a manifesto of the artist – an apologia of the craft of metalwork.²⁴¹

240 **Print as a prototype of mass-media and the ‘information revolution’:** *Vom Holzschnitt zum Internet. Die Kunst und die Geschichte der Bildmedien von 1450 bis heute*, ed. R. Hirner, exh. cat., Kunstmuseum Heidenheim, Bonn, Ostfildern 1997 (it positions the printmaking in a linear progress of media: print-photograph-new media); **on the idea of early printmaking as the first mass-medium write critically:** D. Landau, P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470–1550*, p. 219; P. Parshall, R. Schoch, “Early Woodcuts and the Reception of the Primitive,” in: *The Origins of European Printmaking...*, pp. 1–18, on p. 2; P. Schmidt, “The Multiple Image: The Beginnings of Printmaking, Between Old Theories and New Approaches,” *Studies in the history of art* 19, 2005, pp. 37–56 and in: *The Origins of European Printmaking...*, in particular pp. 39–40. See also: F. Eisermann, “Bevor die Blätter fliegen lernten. Buchdruck, politische Kommunikation und die ‘Medienrevolution’ des 15. Jahrhunderts,” in: *Medien der Kommunikation im Mittelalter*, ed. by K.-H. Spiess, Stuttgart 2003, pp. 289–320; his, “Mixing Pop and Politics: Origins, Transmission, and Readers of Illustrated Broadsides in Fifteenth-century Germany,” in: *Incunabula and Their Readers: Printing, Selling and Using Books in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by J. Kristian, British Library, London 2003, pp. 159–177.

241 ***Censer* – engraving by Martin Schongauer:** E. Flechsig, *Martin Schongauer*, Strasburg 1951, pp. 81–86; J.M. Fritz, *Gestochene Bilder. Gravierungen auf deutschen Goldschmiedearbeiten der Spätgotik*, Cologne 1966, pp. 404; T. Falk, Th. Hirthe, *Martin Schongauer. Das Kupferstichwerk*, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich 1991, cat. no. 106; H. Krohm, “Der ‘Modellcharakter’ der Kupferstiche mit dem Bischofsstab und Weihrauchfaß,” in: *Le beau Martin. Études et mises au point...*, pp. 185–207; S. Kemperdick, *Martin Schongauer. Eine Monographie*, Petersberg 2004, pp. 20 and 59–60. **Martin Schongauer. Recent monographs:** S. Kemperdick, *Martin Schongauer...*; L. Schmidt, *Martin Schongauer und seine Kupferstiche. Materialien und Anregungen zur Erforschung früher Druckgraphik*, Weimar 2004; U. Heinrichs,

Martin Schongauer. Maler und Kupferstecher, Munich 2007; P. Béguerie-De Paepe, M. Haas, *Schongauer à Colmar*, Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar, Antwerp 2011. See also: J. Nicolaisen, *Martin Schongauer. Die Entwicklung des Kupferstiches zur eigenständigen Kunstgattung. Die Herausbildung der Plastizität als druckgraphische Kunstform und bildnerische Vorlage*, dissertation, Freiburg 1995; also Ch. Heck, *Martin Schongauer*, Colmar 1986. **Catalogues of printmaking oeuvre:** A. Shestack, *The Complete Engravings of Martin Schongauer*, New York 1963; *The Illustrated Bartsch*, ed. by W.L. Strauss, J.T. Spike, vol. 8 vols.: *Early German artists: Martin Schongauer, Ludwig Schongauer, and Copyists*, ed. J.C. Hutchinson, 2 vols., New York 1980 and 1996; *New Hollstein: German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, ca. 1400–1700*, vol. 49: *Ludwig Schongauer to Martin Schongauer*, ed. by L. Schmitt, N. Stogdon, Amsterdam 1999; M. Lehrs, *Martin Schongauer: The Complete Engravings*, (*Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, vol. 5, Vienna 1925), new revised edition San Francisco 2005. **Exhibitions:** *Le beau Martin. Gravures et dessins de Martin Schongauer (vers 1450–1491)*, ed. by P. Béguerie et al., curated F. Anzelewsky et al., exh. cat., Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar 1991; T. Falk, Th. Hirthe, *Martin Schongauer. Das Kupferstichwerk*, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich 1991; K. Groll et al., *Martin Schongauer und seine Zeit. Kupferstiche, Holzschnitte und Zeichnungen der Spätgotik aus dem Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Kunsthalle Karlsruhe*, exh. cat., Karlsruhe 1991; S. Renouard de Bussierre, *Martin Schongauer. Maître de la gravure rhénane vers 1430–1491*, exh. cat., Musée du Petit Palais, Paris 1991; *Martin Schongauer. Druckgraphik im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett*, ed. by H. Krohm, J. Nicolaisen, exh. cat., Altes Museum, Berlin 1991. **Studies on the context and on the specific issues related to the oeuvre:** essays in the volume *Le beau Martin. Études et mises au point...*; Ch. Heck, "Martin Schongauer et l'art du XV^e siècle au nord des Alpes: nouveaux intérêts et nouvelles recherches," *Bulletin monumental* 150–III, 1992, pp. 265–273; F. Koreny, "Martin Schongauer as a Draftsman: a Reassessment," *Master Drawings* 34, 1996, no. 2, pp. 123–147; J. Nicolaisen, "Martin Schongauer, ein Mitarbeiter der Werkstatt Hans Memlings? Zur Wanderschaft Schongauers und dem Einfluss der niederländischen Malerei des 15. Jahrhunderts auf sein Werk," *Pantheon* 57, 1999, pp. 33–56; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck to Dürer...*, cat. nos. 142–158. **Influence and reception of Schongauer's prints:** S. Kemperdick, *Martin Schongauer...*, pp. 247–270; see also: D. Müller, "Zeichnungen nach Kupferstichen Martin Schongauers – Überlegungen zu Einfluß und Funktion," in: *Martin Schongauer. Druckgraphik im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett*, pp. 63–72; exh. cat. *Le beau Martin. Gravures et dessins...*, pp. 453 ff. and essays in the volume *Le beau Martin. Études et mises au point...*; J.M. Massing, "Schongauer, Bosch, Grünewald et les autres. De quelques 'Tribulations de saint Antoine' et de leurs influences," in: his, *Studies in imagery*, London 2004, pp. 392–420; A. Châtelet, "Schongauer et les primitifs flamands," *Cahiers alsaciens d'archéologie, d'art et d'histoire* 22, 1979,

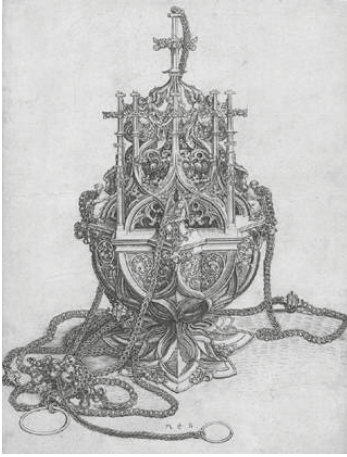


Fig. 358: Martin Schongauer, *Censer*, c. 1480–1491, engraving, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1926 (26.41)



Fig. 359: Northern Netherlandish Master, *Censer from Edam*, after Schongauer's print, c. 1500–1510, Haarlem, Archbishop's Palace

pp. 117–142; A. Galilea Antón, *Martin Schongauer y su importancia en la pintura hispanoflamenca*, in: *La pintura gotica hispanoflamenca. Bartolomé Bermejo y su época*, pp. 87–97 (English text on pp. 508–511); R. Suckale, review: “A. Simon, Österreichische Tafelmalerei der Spätgotik. Der niederländische Einfluss im 15. Jahrhundert,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 66, 2003, pp. 584–592; Th. Primeau, “After Martin Schongauer: The Engraving and Copying Techniques of a Northern Renaissance Master Printmaker and his Followers,” in: *Printed on Paper: The Techniques, History and Conservation of Printed Media*, ed. by J. Colbourne, R.F. Snyder, Newcastle upon Tyne 2009, pp. 14–20; R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, part III: *Martin Schongauer und die Nachfolger Hans Pleydenwurffs*, pp. 215–189; I. Ciulisová, “Stiche als Gebrauchsobjekte. Zur Verbreitung von Schongauers Grafik in Mitteleuropa,” in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck bis Dürer...*, pp. 113–121.

The impact of the new medium of print making did not rely on mass reproduction, or on the multiplication of artistic productions, or upon the repetition of compositions in infinite number of copies. In fact, the entirety of fifteenth-century art was based on repetition. Paintings existed in numerous copies and replicas, while sculptures copied the same models, as in the serial reproduction of the *Beautiful Virgins* and the *Beautiful Pietàs*, some were created with the use of the moulds and the like. Instances when prints were ‘reproductive’ repetitions were much more rare than numerous painterly replicas and versions of paintings (painting, in a way, reproduced itself), and were mostly engravings copying venerated images (those paintings perceived as holy icons).²⁴² Such a print was created, for instance, by Israhel van Meckenem in the late 1490s, copying in two versions the mosaic with the icon of *Vir dolorum* from the Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, certainly for the jubilee of 1500 [figs. 360–364].²⁴³ The print functioned as a substitute, not for the mosaic, but for the holy prototype: its role was not to copy the work of art, but to substitute the sacred – the image-relic.

242 J. Sikorska, *Miedzioryt XV wieku i jego odrębność w sztuce późnego średniowiecza...*, in particular pp. 116–119.

243 H. Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion* (ed. princ. *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter. Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion*, Berlin 1981), New York 1990, pp. 191–196, especially p. 192; P. Parshall, “Imago contracta: Images and Facto in the Northern Renaissance,” *Art History* 16, 1993, no. 4, pp. 554–579; *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1241–1557)*, ed. by H.C. Evans, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2004, cat. no. 329; H. Schlie, “Erscheinung und Bildvorstellung im spätmittelalterlichen Kulturtransfer. Die Rezeption der Imago Pietatis als Selbstoffenbarung Christi in Rom,” in: *Das Bild der Erscheinung. Die Gregorsmesse im Mittelalter*, ed. by A. Gormans, Th. Lentjes, Berlin 2007, pp. 59–121; G. Jurkowlanec, “The rise and early development of the Man of Sorrows in central and northern Europe,” in: *New perspectives on the Man of Sorrows*, ed. by C. R. Puglisi. W.L. Barcham, Kalamazoo 2013, pp. 48–76; J. Freiberg, “La ‘imago pietatis’ de Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, el papa Gregorio Magno y España,” in: *Visiones imperiales y profecía*, ed. by S. Pastore, M. García-Arenal, Madrid 2018, pp. 245–266; A.M. Kim, “‘Painting the Eternal’: micromosaic materiality and transubstantiation in an icon of Christ at Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome,” in: *Almost eternal*, (Art and material culture in Medieval and Renaissance Europe 10), ed. by P. Baker-Bates, E. Calvillo, Leiden – Boston 2018, pp. 273–298.



Fig. 360: Israhel van Meckenem, *Vir dolorum* – engraving after the icon from the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, c. 1490–1500, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 361: *Vir dolorum*, Byzantine mosaic with an icon, c. 1300, Rome, Santa Croce in Gerusalemme

Fifteenth-century art saw two processes linked with the introduction of printing: the transition from the illuminated manuscript to books illustrated with woodcuts and typographical text, and the dissemination of single-leaf prints – *Flugblätter* or *Einblattgraphik*, independent of the printed books. At the same time, in the last quarter of the fifteenth century the collecting of prints became increasingly popular, which allows us to trace practices to do with the handling of the prints, and the criteria for their selections.²⁴⁴

244 Woodcuts and engravings as collectable items: B. Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, exh. cat., Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek, Munich 1990; D. Landau, P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470–1550*, pp. 64–65; S. Griesse, “Sammler und

The collections of Hartmann Schedl (died 1514), Reinhold Soltrump (the collection documented between 1466 and 1480) and Ferdinand Columbus, the son of the famous explorer (the collection from the period between 1515 and 1525) are instructive in this respect.²⁴⁵ The technique was not the deciding factor in acquiring the prints, as they collected both engravings (today perceived as more valuable), and woodcuts.

The processes of assembling prints in series, painting their impressions, including inscriptions on the sheets, cutting the prints out and pasting them on new supports, for instance on handwritten or printed codices, were not, strictly speaking, connoisseurial practices. Indeed, they were common

Abschreiber von Einblattgedrucken. Überlegungen zu einer Rezeptionsform am Ende des 15. und Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts,” in: *Humanismus und früher Buchdruck*, (*Pirckheimer-Jahrbuch* 11), ed. by S. Füssel, V. Honemann, Nuremberg 1996; F.G. Kaltwasser, “‘Colligite fragmenta, ne pereant’. Aus der Geschichte des Kunstsammelns und die Graphiksammlung Hartmann Schedels,” in: *50 Jahre Sammler und Mäzen*, ed. by U. Müller, G. Drescher et al., Schweinfurt 2002, pp. 245–260; P. Landau, “The print collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1539),” in: *Collecting prints and drawings in Europe, c. 1500–1750*, ed. by Ch. Baker, C. Elam, G. Warwick, Aldershot 2003, pp. 29–36; M.P. McDonald, “‘Extremely curious and important!’: reconstructing the print collection of Ferdinand Columbus,” in: *Collecting prints and drawings in Europe...*, pp. 37–54; P. Schmidt, *Gedruckte Bilder in handgeschriebenen Büchern. Zum Gebrauch von Druckgraphik im 15. Jahrhundert*, Cologne 2003, pp. 12 ff; A. Taimina, “15. gadsimta metala griezumata jeb ‘skrosu’ graviras un Rigas patriciesas Reinholda Soltrumpa gramatu likteni (15th Century Metal Engravings and Fortunes of the Riga Patrician Reinhold Soltrump’s Books),” *Makslas Vesture un Teorija* 2, 2004, pp. 5–19; M.P. McDonald, *The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1539): A Renaissance Collector in Seville*, 2 vols., London 2004; his, *Ferdinand Columbus: Renaissance Collector (1488–1530)*, exh. cat., British Museum, London 2005; his, “The lost print collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1539),” in: *Profane images in marginal arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. by E.C. Block et al., Turnhout 2009, pp. 285–300; B. Wagner, *Worlds of learning: The library and world chronicle of the Nuremberg physician Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514)*, in German: *Welten des Wissens: die Bibliothek und die Weltchronik des Nürnberger Arztes Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514)*, exh. cat., Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich 2015; *Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514) – Leben und Werk* (symposium: Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg 2014), ed. by F. Fuchs, Wiesbaden 2016.

245 In the selection of the collectors, I follow Joanna Sikorska, *Miedzioryt XV wieku i jego odrębność w sztuce późnego średniowiecza...*

practices. ‘Loose single-leaf prints reduced the distance between the work of art and the beholder,’ writes Joanna Sikorska, ‘the owner of the print established the print’s specific context, and decided about its use and the ways in which it could suit his needs.’²⁴⁶ Towards this goal the collector chose specific sheets from the series; coloured them, cut them out and pasted them into codices.²⁴⁷ Through these actions, prints became objects of

246 J. Sikorska, *Miedzioryt XV wieku i jego odrębność w sztuce późnego średniowiecza...*, p. 127.

247 **Mounting, pasting, sewing of prints into manuscripts and incunabula:** P. Schmidt, “Gedruckte Bilder in handgeschriebenen Büchern...; P. Schmidt, Bildgebrauch und Frömmigkeitspraxis. Bemerkungen zur Benutzung früherer Druckgraphik,” in: *Spiegel der Seligkeit. Privates Bild und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter*, eds. U. Grossmann, F.M. Kammel, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 2000, pp. 69–83; U. Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region, ca. 1450–1500*, Turnhout–London 2004; U. Weekes, “Convents as patrons and producers of woodcuts in the Low Countries around 1500,” in: *The Woodcut in Fifteenth-Century Europe...*, pp. 259–275. See also: J. Marrow, “A Book of Hours from the Circle of the Master of the Berlin Passion: Notes on the Relationship between Fifteenth-century Manuscript Illumination and Printmaking in the Rhenish Lowlands,” *The Art Bulletin* 60, 1978, pp. 590–616; F.O. Schuppisser, “Copper Engravings of the ‘Mass Production’ Illustrating Netherlandish prayer manuscripts,” in: *Masters and Miniatures*, (congress: *Medieval Manuscript Illumination in the Northern Netherlands*, Utrecht 1989), Dornspijk 1991, pp. 389–440; P. Schmidt, *Kleben statt Malen. Handschriftenillustration im Augustiner-Chorfrauenstift Inzigkofen*, in: *Studien und Texte zur literarischen und materiellen Kultur der Frauenklöster im späten Mittelalter*, ed. by F. Eisermann, E. Schlottheuber, V. Honemann, Leiden–Boston 2004; pp. 243–283; K.M. Rudy, *Piety in pieces: How medieval readers customized their manuscripts*, Cambridge 2016; her, *Image, knife, and gluepot: Early assemblage in manuscript and print*, Cambridge 2019. **Colouring of prints: Painted Prints: The Revelation of Color in Northern Renaissance & Baroque Engravings, Etchings & Woodcuts**, ed. by S. Dackerman, Th Primeau, D. Carton et al., exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art – Saint Louis Art Museum, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park (Pa.) 2002; see also: B. Welzel, “Zur Vielfältigkeit eines Bildmediums. Monochrome und illuminierte Druckgraphik im frühen 16. Jahrhundert,” in: *Bordesholmer Altar des Hans Brüggemann. Werk und Wirkung*, ed. U. Albrecht, Berlin 1996; P. Schmidt, “Beschrieben, bemalt, zerschnitten: Tegernseer Mönche interpretieren einen Holzschnitt,” in: *Einblattdrucke des 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts. Probleme, Perspektiven, Fallstudien*, ed. by V. Honemann, S. Griese, F. Eisermann,

manipulation.²⁴⁸ Alongside cut-out manuscript illuminations, they were stuck on walls inside the home, as documented in fairly numerous Netherlandish paintings from the fifteenth century (*The Portrait of a Young Man* by Petrus Christus from the National Gallery in London, is only the most spectacular example of this) [fig. 19],²⁴⁹ and were pasted on panels, windowsills, the sides of chests and cases.²⁵⁰

M. Ostermann, Tübingen 2000, pp. 245–276; D.S. Areford, “The Image in the Viewer’s Hands: The Reception of Early Prints in Europe,” *Studies in Iconography* 24, 2003, pp. 17 ff.; D.S. Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe*, Farnham 2010 (new edition 2016); *Printing colour 1400–1700, History, techniques, functions and receptions*, ed. by A. Stijnman, E. Savage, Leiden – Boston 2015.

248 See a general survey of the anthropology of the reception of loose prints in: J. Münkner, *Eingreifen und Begreifen, Handhabungen und Visualisierungen in Flugblättern der Frühen Neuzeit*, Berlin 2008.

249 S. Griese, “Gebrauchsformen und Gebrauchsräume von Einblattgedrucken des 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhundert,” in: *Einblattgedrucke des 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts...*, pp. 179–208, here on p. 185 ff.

250 M.J. Zucker, “Early Italian Engravings for Religious Orders,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56, 1993, no. 3, pp. 366–384.

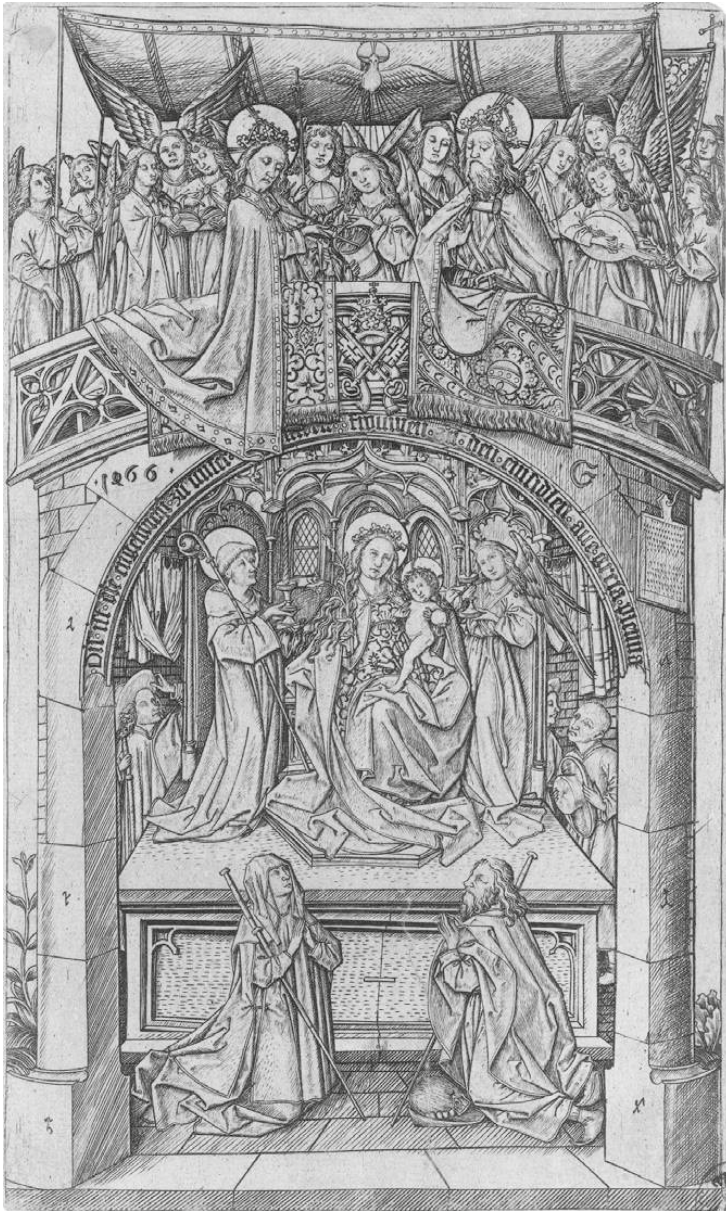


Fig. 362: Master E.S., *The Great Virgin of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 363: Master E.S., *The Middle Virgin of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 364: Master E.S., *The Small Virgin of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett

Prints often played the role of the moveable devotional souvenir: a substitute for a holy or miraculous image. This was the function of the aforementioned engravings by Israhel van Meckenem from the 1490s with the image of the famous *Vir dolorum* from Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, establishing also a sign of a mental pilgrimage (which I discuss in greater detail in chapter VI.5–7). The souvenirs from the actual pilgrimage were the three versions of the *Virgin of Einsiedeln* created by Master E.S. in 1466 [figs. 362–364].²⁵¹

251 Master E.S., *Madonna from Einsiedeln* (L.68, L.72 and L.81): E.W. Hoffman, "Some Engravings Executed by the Master ES for the Benedictine Monastery at Einsiedeln," *The Art Bulletin* 43, 1961, pp. 231–237; A. Shestack, *Master E.S.*, exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia 1967, cat. no. 67; H. Bevers, *Meister E. S. Ein oberrheinischer Kupferstecher der Spätgotik*, exh.

The engravings, in three different sizes (9.7 × 6.5cm, 13.3 × 8.7cm and 21 × 12.3cm) were destined for penitents from a range of different social classes who arrived at this Benedictine Abbey – the centre of veneration of an image of the Virgin – to celebrate the legendary events of 14th September in the year 948. On that day Conrad, the Bishop of Constance, whilst consecrating the monastery heard a voice saying: ‘Stop, my son; God himself has consecrated this place.’ The miracle was officially confirmed by a papal bull issued by Pope John XIII in 966, and from that time onwards 14th September became an annual feast of the Miraculous Consecration of the Church, which was celebrated with a procession of torches. In 1466, the faithful celebrated the quincentenary of the official recognition of the miracle. The monastery expected crowds of pilgrims and for that occasion prepared three versions of the commemorative print, ordered from an important printmaker. The celebrations lasted fourteen days and – as described in the documents of the monastery – over one hundred and thirty thousand devotional souvenirs were sold at that time. The miracle *Dedicatio Angelica* (*Engelsweihe*) was linked to the cult of the statue of the Virgin displayed in a chapel by the entrance to the sanctuary, hence the figure is included in the centre of the prints. In the smallest version, she is the main protagonist, venerated by angels and St. Benedict; the narrative about the miraculous consecration performed by the Holy Trinity accompanied by the angels is omitted from the composition. This theme was developed in great detail in the large print, through the depiction of God the Father, Christ and the dove of the Holy Spirit and the angels. This composition is slightly reduced in the middle-sized version, which includes only the figures of the Holy Trinity. Each version, differing in the size and level of its precision,

cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich – Kupferstichkabinett Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Munich 1986, pp. 43 ff; H. Appuhn, “Das Monogramm des Meisters E. S. und die Pilgerfahrt nach Einsiedeln,” *Kunstchronik* 41, 1988, pp. 277–280; *Meister E. S. Alle 320 Kupferstiche*, ed. H. Appuhn, Dortmund 1989, pp. 373 ff.; P. Schmidt, “Die Kupferstiche des Meisters E. S. zur Wallfahrt nach Einsiedeln. Einige Überlegungen zum Publikum, Programm und Kontext,” in: *Artibus. Kulturwissenschaft und deutsche Philologie des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by S. Füssel, G. Hübner et al., Wiesbaden 1994, pp. 293–318; B. Welzel, “Die Engelweihe in Einsiedeln und Die Kupferstiche vom Meister E.S.,” *Städel-Jahrbuch* 15, 1995, pp. 121–144; J. Höfler, *Der Meister E. S. ...*, pp. 91–92; S. Marti, “Das Gnadenbild von Einsiedeln und die Verehrung der Schwarzen Madonna,” in: *Kloster Einsiedeln. Pilgern seit 1000 Jahren*, exh. cat., Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum Zurich 2017–2018, Berlin 2017, pp. 88–111. For further bibliography, see notes 146–147 and 255–256.

was suited for the financial situation of the penitents – having at their disposal significant, moderate or very modest funds. On the other hand the three prints carried a different message: the print for the common folk clearly promoted the simple veneration of the miraculous statue of the Virgin, whilst the other two, dedicated to the more well-to-do and better-educated penitents, linked the cult with the history of the miraculous consecration of the church, as well as illustrating the history and splendour of the abbey.



Fig. 365: German Master from c. 1420, *St. Dorothy*, woodcut, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek



Fig. 366: *Pietà from the Castle in Maibingen*, woodcut, first half of the 15th century, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 367: Southern German Master from c. 1410–1420, *The Crucifixion*, coloured woodcut, Graz, Bibliothek der Karl-Franz-Universität



Fig. 368: *The Holy Family*, coloured woodcut, c. 1400, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 369: *St. Christopher*, coloured woodcut, 1423, Manchester, The University of Manchester Library, John Rylands Library, Blockbook 17249.2

Therefore, prints were at times complex and sophisticated, or simple and ordinary. The latter formula of popular, cheap devotional prints can be discussed based on the woodcut showing *St. Dorothy* by a German master c. 1420 (an impression from Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek); or the *Pietà from the Castle in Maibingen* (Vienna, Albertina); or coloured woodcuts by anonymous masters from southern Germany: *The Crucifixion*, c. 1410–1420 (Graz, Bibliothek der Karl-Franz-Universität); *The Holy Family*, c. 1400 (Vienna, Albertina); *St. Christopher*, from 1423 (Manchester, John Rylands University Library) – to name only the early examples [figs. 365–369]. The woodcuts had a simple format, simple subject matter, and simple technique. They added to the devotional images the desired quality of accessibility and a directness of reception, frequently enhanced through the genre mode of representation, through which the world of the holy figures seemed relatable to the faithful's own everyday reality. The simple woodcuts were often handled for extensive periods of time, until they were completely damaged and discarded. Consequently,

only relatively few examples have survived. However, it was not those woodcuts used in daily devotions that became early collectible items, but instead woodcuts with much more elaborate forms and more technically sophisticated, as well as more intrinsically refined, engravings.

Those buying prints could assemble their own sets and series. The Master of the Berlin Passion and his workshop produced Passion cycles, composed of forty-five or more small prints, printed in eight on one sheet, from which they could be cut out and organised in sets, and pasted into manuscripts or incunabula; if they were printed in the right order, they could even be folded into small books [fig. 370]. One could buy a manuscript on parchment, with spaces left deliberately empty for the additional paper woodcuts. Such products were certainly much cheaper and more accessible than a fully illuminated codex. The monastic scriptoria and printing presses produced such manuscripts and single-leaf prints.²⁵² For instance, the abbess Jacoba van Loon in 1466 had in her monastery of Bethany near Mechelen ‘an instrument for printing words and images’ and ‘nine woodblocks and fourteen stone blocks [that is, matrices] for printing images’.²⁵³ The Dominican convent of St. Catherine in Nuremberg had a large number of prints, including *Bildtafel* – a board with a collage of eighty-five coloured woodcuts. However, it is not clear whether the prints were produced in the convent.²⁵⁴ In any case, convents collected prints and paper products, among other cheap devotional things, as documented by the collection of *papier-mâché* reliefs, reliefs made from sheets of tin and woodcuts surviving in the Cistercian nunnery in Wienhausen, near Celle. Brushes and shells for dyes and pigments survive in the nunnery, which confirm that the prints and other items were hand-coloured in situ. Among the woodcuts there were entire sheets with multiplied images of saints and Christ (including the Holy Face), which were intended to be cut and sold as individual pieces.²⁵⁵

252 **Prints produced in convents:** P. Schmidt, “The Use of Prints in German Convents of the Fifteenth Century: The Example of Nuremberg,” *Studies in iconography* 24, 2003, pp. 43–69; U. Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion...*; *The Origins of European Printmaking...*, pp. 92–94; U. Weekes, *Convents as Patrons and Producers of Woodcuts...*

253 J.W. Enschedé, “Een drukkerij buten Mechelen voor 1466,” *Het Boek* 7, 1918, pp. 286–292. U. Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion...*, p. 163.

254 P. Schmidt, *The Use of Prints in German Convents of the Fifteenth century...*; *The Origins of European Printmaking...*, pp. 92–94 and 169.

255 **The devotional artefacts of the Wienhausen Nunnery:** H. Appuhn, C. von Heusinger, “Der Fund kleiner Andachtsbilder des 13. bis 17. Jahrhundert im



Fig. 370: Anonymus printmaker after the Master of the Berlin Passion, *The Road to the Calvary*, metalcut, hand-coloured, from the series of forty cuts *The Fall of Man and the Life and Passion of Christ*, ca. 1470–1480, London, British Museum, 1912,0808.25

Kloster Wienhausen,” *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 4, 1965, pp. 157–238; H. Appuhn, *Kloster Wienhausen: Der Fund vom Nonnenchor*, Hamburg 1973; J.F. Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent*, California University Press, Berkeley 1997; E.-M. Haenlein, *Traces of Spirituality: Analysis of Thirteen Papiemâché Reliefs from the Fifteenth Century Found in the Nunnery at Wienhausen*, M.A. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, London 2002; U. Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion...*, pp. 167–185; *Krone und Schleier...*, in particular pp. 437–441.



Fig. 371: Master E.S., engravings from the series *Apostles with the Text of the Creed*, c. 1455–1460, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 372: Master E.S., engravings from the series *Christ as Salvator Mundi and (Standing) Apostles*, c. 1450–1455; *Christ*: London, British Museum; *Apostles*: Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 373: Master E.S., *Apostles Surrounding the Enthroned Christ*, engraving, c. 1455–1460, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 374: Master E.S., engravings from the series of *Apostles (seated)*, c. 1450–1455, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 375: Master E.S., engravings from the series of *Apostles Standing in Niches*, 1467, London, British Museum; Vienna, Albertina; Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett

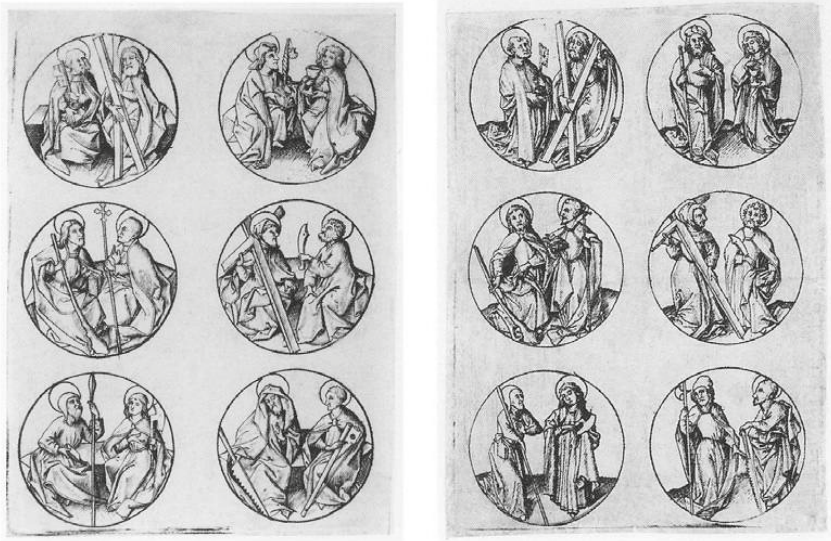


Fig. 376: Master E.S., two series of engravings: *Medallions with Pairs of Seated Apostles* and *Medallions with Pairs of Standing Apostles*, c. 1460–1465 Vienna, Albertina and Oxford, Ashmolean Museum



Fig. 377: Master E.S., Series of rounded engravings *The Passion of Christ and figures of the Church Fathers and Saints*, c. 1460–1465, Basel, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 378: Master E.S., Series of rounded engravings displaying *Four Evangelists*, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett

The Master E.S., an engraver active c. 1445/1450–1467 in the Upper Rhine region, between Basel and Strasburg, was the one who discovered the influence and commercial potential of printed cycles.²⁵⁶ Between c. 1450 and 1467 he produced in his workshop as many as eight series of *Apostles*,

256 Master E.S.: Monographs – see note 147; the surveys of the problem K.P.F. Moxey, “Master E. S. and the Folly of Love,” *Simiolus* 11, 1980, pp. 125–148; H. Bevers, *Meister E. S. Der grosse Liebesgarten*, Frankfurt a.M. 1994; Ch. von Heusinger, “Ein unerkanntes Kartenspiel des Meister E. S.,” in: *Le beau Martin...*, pp. 215–221; J.A. Wurst, *Das Figurenalphabet des Meisters E. S.*, (Schriften aus dem Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität München 73),

clearly intended to fulfil different functions.²⁵⁷ The cycle of small engravings (9.3 x 6.3cm) has figures of standing saints (L. 100–111) [fig. 371], including their names in nimbuses, and the text of the *Credo* (the symbol of the Apostles) in banderols that identified the figures and allowed them to be organised in a desired sequence: only the full set of sheets provided the complete text. This solution was employed again by Israhel van Meckenem in his cycle *Apostles* (L. 295), in which he placed a sequence of text in scrolls ‘pasted on’ the surface of the ledge, with the half-figures of saints visible behind it.

Another series by Master E.S. with images of the Apostles – similarly, standing but shown without the banderols or texts – opens with an image of Christ as *Salvator Mundi* (L. 124–136; c. 14.5 x 9cm) [fig. 372]. It could have been assembled in a row, starting with the sheet depicting Christ, or in a circle with images of the Apostles surrounding the central figure of Christ, or in a row with Christ in the middle. The figures of the Apostles surrounding Christ were intended to be cut out (L. 137; 21.5 x 14.2cm); in a sheet preserved in Albertina, Vienna [fig. 373]. The cycle with the Apostles seated on the thrones and benches in varied and sophisticated poses (L. 112–132; c. 14.5 x 10cm) [fig. 374] could have been intended for woodcarvers and sculptors as a set of *modelli*, or for wider audiences, as a set of cards to assemble following the logic of the poses – for instance in the sets of figures presented symmetrically, towards each other, or as pairs of figures shown from the back, frontally or in profile. The cycle with pairs of Apostles, depicted under arcades decorated with tracery (L.94–99; dated 1467), is a good example of designs for woodcarvers, engravers, goldsmiths and other craftsmen [fig. 375]. At the same time, the cycle’s form of loose devotional prints allowed the beholder to

Munich 1999; N. Gramaccini, “Meister E S und Israhel van Meckenem als Künstler-Unternehmer,” in: *Festschrift für Eberhard W. Kornfeld*, ed. Ch.E. Stauffer, Bern 2003, pp. 13–36; J. Höfler, “Zum Einfluß des Meisters E. S. auf die niederländische Malerei: der Tod Mariens des Hugo van der Goes in Brügge,” *Zbornik za umetnostno zgodovino* N.S. 42, 2006, pp. 77–91; S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 137–138; S. Matter, “Konversationsstücke des 15. Jahrhunderts. Überlegungen zu einigen Minnegarten-Stichen um Meister E.S. vor dem Hintergrund literarischer Minnediskurse der Zeit,” in: *Peiraios’ Erben. Die Genese der Genremalerei bis 1550 (Boors, bagnios and brothels: mapping the birth of genre painting before 1550 / Bauern, Bäder und Bordelle. Zur Genese der Genremalerei bis 1550)*, (Trierer Beiträge zu den historischen Kulturwissenschaften 14), ed. by B.U. Münch, J. Müller, Wiesbaden 2015, pp. 337–357. Cf. notes 146–147 and 250.

257 J. Höfler, *Der Meister E. S. ...*, vol. I, pp. 81–85, vol. II, figs. 92–137 and 197–198.

organise the sheets according to the form of the architectural frames – three schemes are repeated twice. Two sheets with small medallions showing standing and seated figures of the Apostles in pairs (L. 197 and 198) [fig. 376] were clearly intended to be cut and reassembled, just like other similar small printed tondi (all measure approximately 3cm in diameter). They are printed in a set on a single leaf: the six medallions with the *Life of the Virgin* (L. 193); twelve in six on a sheet depicting the *Passion of Christ* (L. 194–196); ten with figures of saints and innocent children (L. 199), and twelve with the Passion of Christ and figures of the Fathers of the Church and saints (L. 201) [fig. 377]. The tondo format was employed by Master E.S. in the series of the four *Evangelists* (L. 84–87), presented in significantly larger medallions (11.8–12cm in diameter) [fig. 378], and in single-leaf prints: *The Coronation of the Virgin* (L. 36; 8.5cm in diameter), *The Virgin and Child in a Garden* (L. 67; 8.6cm) and three heraldic medallions (L. 217–219; 6.4–6.5cm). This type of printed tondi were ideally suited as patterns for goldsmiths, woodcarvers and stained-glass makers: their standard dimensions (6.5, 8.5, and 12cm) corresponded with the shapes of boxes and plaquettes of mother-of-pearl, boxwood and other precious materials, or the format of the medallions used for the decoration of various precious golden artefacts or metalworks [fig. 379].²⁵⁸ Surely, they also functioned as independent works of art, to be collected in sets and series.



Fig. 379: Georg or Paul Schongauer, *Pax* (view of the inside), gilded silver, engraved silver plaquettes: *Agony in the Garden* and *The Arrest of Christ* after engravings by Martin Schongauer, c. 1490–1500, Basel, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett

258 R.A. Koch, C. Sommer, "A Mother-of-Pearl Carving after the Master ES," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 5, 1942, pp. 119–124. For prints as sources

Some engravings by Master E.S., today dispersed, can be assembled into sequences of presumed original series. The dimensions of impressions suggest, for instance that the prints with *The Annunciation* (L. 9; 12.8 × 8.4cm), *The Visitation* (L. 16; 12.5 × 7.9cm or 13 × 8.3cm), *The Nativity* (L. 20; 12.7 × 8.1cm) and *The Adoration of the Magi* (L. 25; various dimensions in different editions: 12.6 × 8.2, 12.6 × 8 and 12.7 × 8.8cm) could have once formed a Marian series [fig. 380]. Similarly, prints showing *The Visitation* (L. 14; 9.2 × 6.4cm), *The Adoration of the Magi* (L. 24; 9.5 × 6.8cm) and *Pentecost* (L. 34; 9.4 × 6.6cm) [fig. 381] could have belonged to another, smaller cycle. What is more important, even if they were not created as regular series, but were designed as individual sheets, they could have been organised in sets after their production; indeed, they were probably often assembled in such a way.

for sculptors and wood-carvers see: H. Huth, *Künstler und Werkstatt der Spätgotik*, Darmstadt 1967, pp. 35–36; J. Bier, “Riemenschneider’s Use of Graphic Sources,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 50, 1957, pp. 203–222.



Fig. 380: Master E.S., engravings that can be assembled into series: *The Annunciation* (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum), *The Visitation* (Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett), *The Nativity* (Vienna, Albertina) and *The Adoration of the Magi* (Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung), c. 1455–1460



Fig. 381: Master E.S., engravings that can be assembled into series: *The Visitation* (Washington, The National Gallery of Art, *The Adoration of the Magi* (Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett) and *Pentecost* (same location), c. 1455–1460

This seriality had huge commercial advantages. Following Master E.S., other celebrated printmakers employed it on a wider scale: the Handbook Master, Israhel van Meckenem, Martin Schongauer, and Albrecht Dürer. The final artist sold various printed series on a mass scale during his journey to the Netherlands in 1521–1522, as described in his diary. He sold or offered as a gift over one hundred and eight ‘book’ series that were ready to be bound in volumes, including cycles of the *Apocalypse*, the *Life of the Virgin*, and the *Large Passion*; twenty-four sets of the *Engraved Passion*; twenty-two sets of the *Small Woodcut Passion*, and eight sets of unknown prints, of which one was sold to Margaret of Austria, the regent of the Netherlands (another was sent to Rome to a ‘certain Italian artist’).²⁵⁹

259 Cf. J. Remond, “Distributing Dürer in the Netherlands: gifts, prints and the mediation of fame in the early sixteenth century,” in: *The Agency of Things in Medieval and Early Modern Art...*, pp. 117–126; P. von den Brink. S. Foister et al., *Dürer was here: A journey becomes legend (Albrecht Dürer’s Journey to Antwerp and Aachen in 1520–21)*, exhibition at the Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum in Aachen and the National Gallery in London, prepared for the year 2020, moved to the summer 2021.

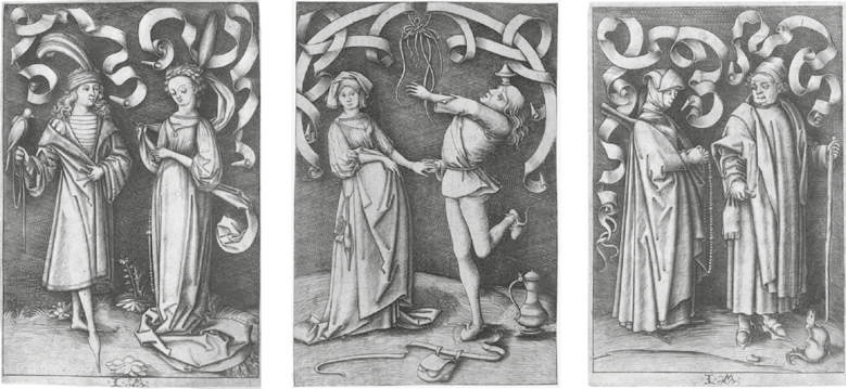


Fig. 382: Israhel van Meckenem, engravings from the series *Well- and Ill-Matched Couples*, c. 1495–1503, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection; New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Wallerstein, 1955 (55.527); New York, Cooper–Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum



Fig. 383: Israhel van Meckenem, *Children Bathing* or *Children Playing*, a pair of engravings Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett

It was not only devotional prints that were organised in series. Between 1495 and 1500 Israhel van Meckenem, a goldsmith and printmaker from Bocholt, Westphalia, presumably a son of the aforementioned Master of the Berlin Passion, and perhaps a pupil of Master E.S.,²⁶⁰ created a series of engravings showing *Well- and Ill-Matched Couples*: a genre of anecdotal prints showing pairs of men and women (old with young, or in the same age), as well as some frivolous prints showing *Children Bathing* or *Children Playing* (L. 478–479) [figs. 382–383]. The empty scrolls included in these prints challenge the viewer to interact with them, to initiate a dialogue: the beholder was to inscribe these blank spaces – on the actual print or imaginatively in his mind – with a personal text, adding a specific meaning to the depictions.

260 Israhel van Meckenem: E. Bröker, *Israhel van Meckenem und der deutsche Kupferstich des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Kunsthaus der Stadt Bocholt, Bocholt 1972; F. Koreny, J.C. Hutchison, *Early German Artists: Israhel van Meckenem, Wenzel von Olmütz and Monogrammist* (The Illustrated Bartsch 9), ed. W.L. Strauss, New York 1981; F. Koreny, *Israhel van Meckenem*, (Hollstein's German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, 24–24A), Blaricum 1986; A. Riether, *Israhel van Meckenem (um 1440/45–1503). Kupferstiche – der Münchner Bestand*, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich 2006 (see there also essay: Ch. Metzger, *Multiplikator des Ruhmens. Israhel van Meckenem Kopien vor dem Hintergrund spätmittelalterlicher Traditionsgebundenheit*, pp. 199–203). A. Riether, D. Scilla, A. Nakada, *Sacred and secular: Israhel van Meckenem & early German engraving*, ed. by A. Nakada et al., exh. cat., The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo 2016. From numerous other surveys see, for instance: J. Schnack, *Der Passionszyklus in der Graphik Israhel van Meckenems und Martin Schongauers*, Münster 1979; A.S. Labuda, "Israhel van Meckenem und die osteuropäische Malerei. Überlegungen zur Rezeption des graphischen Vorbildes," *Unser Bocholt* 33, 1982, pp. 1–60; D.G. Scillia, "The Audiences for Israhel van Meckenem's Proverb Imagery, circa 1500," in: *In Detail: New Studies of Northern Renaissance Art in Honor of Walter S. Gibson*, ed. L.S. Dixon, Turnhout 1998, pp. 83–95; O. Plaßmann, *Israhel van Meckenem. Kupferstiche des späten Mittelalters aus Westfalen*, Paderborn 2000; N. Gramaccini, "Meister E S und Israhel van Meckenem als Künstler-Unternehmer," in: *Festschrift für Eberhard W. Kornfeld*, ed. Ch.E. Stauffer, Bern 2003, pp. 13–36; R. Reinhold, "Die Spielkarten des Israhel van Meckenem (1450–1503)," *Der Alte: Jahresschrift des Schloß- und Spielkartenmuseum Altenburg* 10, 2006, pp. 9–11; J. Stumpel, "Dance and Distinction: Spotting a Motif in Weiditz, Dürer and Van Meckenem," *Simiolus* 32, 2006, pp. 5–16. H.M. Schmidt, "Miscellanea zu Israhel van Meckenem," *Das Münster* 71, 2018, no. 2, pp. 207–212; his, "Das 'Herodesfest' des Israhel van Meckenem oder Verlobnisfeier am Hof des Herzogs von Kleve, ein frühes Historienbild," *Das Münster* 73, 2020, no. 1, pp. 56–59.



Fig. 384: Albrecht Dürer, *The Angelic Mass*, drawing, c. 1500, Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie



Fig. 385: Master E.S., *A Youngster Embracing a Girl*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Basel, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 386: Master E.S., *A Knight and a Lady*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 387: Master E.S., *A Fool Fondling a Naked Girl*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 388: Israhel van Meckenem, *Couple Seated on a Bed*, engraving from the series *Scenes of Everyday Life*, 1495, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1918 (18.90.1)



Fig. 389: Hans Süß von Kulmbach, *A Girl Making a Wreath from Forget-Me-Nots*, verso of the *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1510, New York, The Metropolitan Museum, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.21)



Fig. 390: Urs Graf, *Ill-Matched Couple (The choice between wealth and youth)*, woodcut, c. 1511, London, British Museum, 1875,0710.1455

This operational mode manifested through ‘silent’ banderols was common in German and Netherlandish printmaking in the fifteenth century. It was employed by all famous printmakers, including Dürer, for instance in his engraving *A Young Woman Attacked by Death* (B. 92, c. 1494). The hand-written inscription is clear in an engraving of *Christ as the Savior Mundi* by Martin Schongauer in the Martin von Wagner-Museum in Würzburg;²⁶¹ in turn, Dürer in his drawing *The Angelic Mass* in Rennes (Musée des Beaux-Arts) included a tablet with a telling inscription: “Do schreibet hrein was jr wollt” (Write here what you wish) [fig. 384].²⁶² These added texts could be relatively long, perhaps even entire conversations, since the scrolls in genre and erotic scenes by Master E.S. were potentially very capacious. It is curious to speculate on the character of phrases inscribed in the engravings entitled *Two Pairs of Lovers in a Love Garden* (the so-called *Small Garden of Love*; L. 207); *The Fool Playing the Flute and a Naked Woman Playing the Lute* (L. 208); *The Youngster Embracing a Girl (The Stolen Kiss*, L. 209); *The Knight and a Lady* (L. 210) or *The Fool Fondling a Naked Girl* (L. 213) [figs. 385–387]. Presumably these inscriptions would be fairly lewd. Similarly, frivolous texts might have been included in scrolls in the series of engravings by Israhel van Meckenem, showing various pairs of lovers [fig. 701], which could be interpreted in the light of its pendant – the series called *Scenes of the Everyday Life (Alltagsleben*, 1495; L. 499–510), which straightforwardly praised the virtues of engaged, married, domestic and family life [fig. 388].²⁶³ The long, empty scrolls invited viewers to fill them with hand-written inscriptions of one’s own invention. They enabled the beholder to take part in establishing the meaning of the scene: to interpret it and decide upon its message. The fact that the empty scrolls are particularly prominent in ‘sleazy’ scenes is therefore not accidental. They allowed a safe opportunity for viewers and inscribers to transgress cultural *decorum*, and go beyond socially accepted norms. The inscriptions could be more vulgar than, for instance, the phrase: “Ich pint [bind] mit, vergis mein nit” – ‘I make a wreath, don’t forget me’ on the back of the *Portrait of a Young Man* by Hans Süß von Kulmbach from c. 1510 (New York,

261 L. Schmitt, *Ludwig Schongauer to Martin Schongauer, (Hollstein’s German engravings, etchings and woodcuts*; ed. N. Stogdon, vol. 49), Rotterdam 1999, p. XXXIV, fig. 6.

262 E. Panofsky, *Albrecht Dürer*, Princeton 1948, vol. II, p. 92.

263 B. Lyman, “Die sogenannte ‘Folge aus dem Alltagsleben’ von Israhel van Meckenem: Ein spätgotischer Kupferstichzyklus zu Liebe und Ehe,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 53, 1992, pp. 7–44.

Metropolitan Museum, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan), which depicts a young girl preparing a wreath from fresh forget-me-nots [fig. 389].²⁶⁴ In other instances, these inscriptions could act as a way to moralise and familiarise the representation's sexual message, as in the woodcut by Urs Graf – an artist, whose work looks back to Schongauer's oeuvre, and to other printmakers of the previous generation – the *Ill-Matched Couple* (*The choice between wealth and youth*) from c. 1511 (the only impression survives in the British Museum London);²⁶⁵ “Bedenkt / Das end / Das ist mein rot / Wann alle ding beschliet / der todt” (“Remember death; that is the end [for my soul] as death concludes all”) [fig. 390]. The printmaker left a blank space in the scroll in the upper part of the composition to allow the beholder to individually address this didactic message. Consequently, the phrase in the lower section was not meant to be the sole or the final commentary on the depicted scene; rather the viewer was entitled to add a personal stance on the issue, perhaps utterly different if not opposite to the ‘official’ views.



Fig. 391: Housebook Master, *Peasant and a Countrywoman with a Coat-of-Arms*, two engravings and drypoints, c. 1475–1480, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet

264 B.R. Butts, ‘Dürerschüler’ Hans Süß von Kulmbach, dissertation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1985, pp. 76–78; K. Löcher, in: *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg, 1300–1550*, (in German: *Nürnberg 1300–1550: Kunst der Gotik und Renaissance*), exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1986, cat. no. 162; P. Strieder, *Tafelmalerei in Nürnberg, 1350–1550*, Königstein i.T., 1993, pp. 131–132, cat. no. 124.

265 G. Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, exh. cat., British Museum, London 1995, cat. no. 222; M. McDonald, *Ferdinand Columbus: Renaissance Collector*, cat. no. 91.



Fig. 392: Martin Schongauer, engraving from the series of *Wild Men and Wild Women with Coats-of-Arms*, c. 1480–1490, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1928 (28.26.9)



Fig. 393: Monogrammist bvg, *Pairs of Lovers in the Love Garden*, four engravings, c. 1480, Vienna, Albertina; Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France; Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Douce Bequest

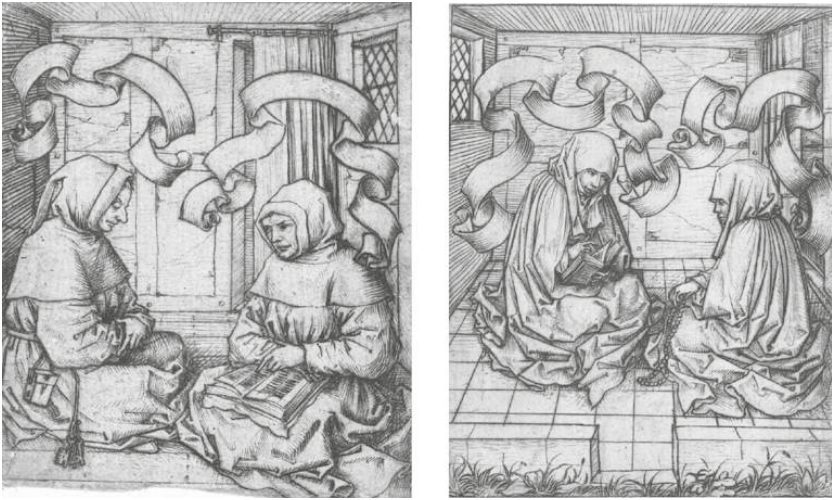


Fig. 394: Housebook Master, *Two Monks* and *Two Nuns*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1480, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet

The Housebook Master created two drypoint tondi, showing a *Peasant and a Countrywoman with Coat-of-Arms* (L. 79, 81; c. 1475–1480; 7.8cm in diameter).²⁶⁶ The same technique was employed to the same format by Martin Schongauer in a series of images of *Wild Men and Wild Women*

266 **The Housebook Master:** J.C. Hutchison, *The Master of the Housebook*, New York 1972; J. P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life...*; D. Hess, *Meister um das "mittelalterliche Hausbuch."* *Studien zur Hausbuchmeisterfrage*, Mainz 1994; Ch. Graf zu Waldburg Wolfegg, *Venus und Mars. Das mittelalterliche Hausbuch aus der Sammlung der Fürsten zu Waldburg Wolfegg*, exh. cat., Haus der Kunst, Munich 1997 (expanded and revised version of the text from 1957); T.B. Husband, *The Medieval Housebook & the Art of Illustration*, the book accompanying the exhibition, Frick Collection, New York 1999. See also more detailed studies: J. P. Filedt Kok, "The Prints of the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet," *Apollo* 117, 1983, pp. 427–436; *Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet* (symposium Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam 1985), Amsterdam 1985 (there for instance: F. Anzelewsky, *Das "Mittelalterliche Hausbuch," sein Inhalt und seine Deutung*, pp. 23–30; H.-J. Raupp, *Der Hausbuchmeister und die Anfänge der Bauernsatire in der deutschen Graphik*, pp. 55–62); T. Husband, "The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet, the Master of the Housebook Genre and Tournament Pages, and a Stained-glass panel at the Cloisters," in: *Studies on Medieval Stained-Glass* (symposium Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1985), ed. by M.H. Caviness,

with *Coat-of-Arms* (L. 99–104; c. 1480–1490) [figs. 391–392].²⁶⁷ These prints could serve either as the patterns for heraldic motifs decorating various objects, especially the rounded stained-glass windows in houses of the well-to-do patricians and nobility, or as sheets to be assembled into a complete whole with a moral or entertaining message. The four, large engraved tondi by the Monogrammist b×g, from the workshop of the Housebook Master, fulfilled exclusively that latter function. They showed the *Pairs of Lovers in the Love Garden*, drinking wine, playing cards and making music (L. 101–104; 89–90cm in diameter; c. 1480) [fig. 393].²⁶⁸ They were sets of entertaining prints, amusing with their comic content: amorous, merry people – not courtly lovers, but ordinary city dwellers.

T. Husband, New York 1985, pp. 138–157; K. Hoffmann, “‘Vom Leben im späten Mittelalter’: Aby Warburg und Norbert Elias zum ‘Hausbuchmeister,’” *Städel-Jahrbuch* N.F. 12, 1989, pp. 47–58; B. Brinkmann, “Ein unbekanntes Werk Wolfgang Beurers, des Meisters WB,” *Städel-Jahrbuch* N.F. 15, 1995 (1996), pp. 145–174; Ch. Kleinert, “Pilger, Bettler, edle Herren. Frankfurter Spuren zum Leben der Roma im 15. Jahrhundert,” in: ‘...Ihrer Bürger Freiheit’. *Frankfurt am Main im Mittelalter*, ed. H. Müller, Frankfurt a.M. 2004, pp. 197–229 (for the representations of the Gypsies); D. Hess, M. Liedtke et al., *Mit Milchbrei und Rute. Familie, Schule und Bildung in der Reformationszeit*, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 2005; D.G. Scillia, “Looking for Fun in All the Wrong Places: Humour and Comedy in Moralizing Prints,” in: *Profane Images in Marginal Arts of the Middle Ages* (colloquium: University of Sheffield 2003), ed. by E.C. Block et al., Turnhout 2009, pp. 199–220; M. Schedl, *Tafelmalerei der Spätgotik am südlichen Mittelrhein*, Mainz 2016, pp. 157–220. See also note 431 below – for portrait in Gotha and other paintings by the Master.

267 J.P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life...*, cat. nos. 79–80.

268 J.P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life...*, cat. nos. 98–101.



Fig. 395: Housebook Master, *Falconers*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1485, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet



Fig. 396: Housebook Master, *Two Huntsmen with a Dog*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1480, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet



Fig. 397: Housebook Master, *The Hunting Party*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1485–1490, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 398: Housebook Master, *The Deer Hunting*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1485–1490, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet

The fact that printmaking masters did not produce their work in series, but serially made recurring versions of similar scenes, framing them in roughly standardised formats, proves that there was a high demand for prints that could be thematically and compositionally organised into complete cycles. The print showing the *Two Monks* by the Housebook Master had to be juxtaposed with the *Two Nuns* of slightly larger dimensions (L. 68–69) [fig. 394]; this was suggested by the compositional similarities between the figures and the large, wavy, but again empty, scrolls (unique impressions of the prints survive in Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam c. 1480).²⁶⁹ The print showing the *Falconers*, by the same Master, was worth owning alongside the *Two Huntsmen with a Dog* or *The Hunting Party* (L. 70, 71, 72), and all these drypoint prints, which shared a similar format (12.4 × 7.2; 12.8 × 9.2 and 12.5 × 9.2cm) could be juxtaposed with *The Deer Hunting* (L. 67) of a different, larger format (17.2 × 9.3cm) [figs. 395–398].²⁷⁰ It was easy to compile a set of painterly types: peasants, wanderers, gypsies; or erotic scenes with lovers and Gardens of Love in various groupings.

269 J.P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life...*, cat. nos. 68–69.

270 J.P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life...*, cat. nos. 70–72 and 67.



Fig. 399: Martin Schongauer, *The Virgin with a Parrot*, engraving, c. 1480–1485?, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1937 (37.3.6)



Fig. 400: Master E.S., *Pentecost*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett



Fig. 401: Monogrammist b x g, *Pair of Lovers in an Embrace*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1934 (34.38.6)

The effects of playing with the viewer, introduced by various printmakers, testify to the clear role of this medium in the collector and connoisseurial culture of the fifteenth century, as well as its entertaining function. The *Virgin with a Parrot* by Schongauer is framed by an illusionistic window [fig. 399].²⁷¹ The engravings by Master E.S. that show the *Annunciation* (L. 11, 12, 13), *Augustus and the Sibyl of the Tiber* (L. 191), and also the *Virgin and Child* (L. 74), are all framed by the portal of a set of doors carved in a stone wall. In a similar way, a richly ornamented arcade with tracery frames the scene of *Pentecost* (L. 35) [fig. 400].²⁷² In the aforementioned engraving by the Master MZ, the *Pair of Lovers in an Embrace* (L. 16), a woman intently and meaningfully looks at the viewer, making him an indiscreet voyeur [fig. 72].²⁷³ A similar gaze characterises the woman being fondled by a youth in the engraving by the monogrammist b x g (a unique print in the Metropolitan Museum in New York) [fig. 401].²⁷⁴ Therefore, it

271 U. Heinrichs-Schreiber, "Oeil et illusion. La signification de la fenêtre dans la Vierge au Perroquet de Martin Schongauer," *Bulletin de la Société Schongauer* 1997–2000, pp. 174–200.

272 J. Höfler, *Der Meister E. S....*, passim.

273 S. Schrader, "Master M.Z.'s Embrace: The construction of visual dialogue," *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin* 47, 1993, no. 11, pp. 15–16.

274 J.P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life....*, cat. no. 106.

is redundant to list the innumerable visual devices used in the various representations of these characters so that they appear to come out of the frame towards the viewer, or instances where the figure addresses the beholder or gazes meaningfully. The conclusion that may be drawn from them is straightforward: namely, that single-leaf prints were not always ‘fleeting’ (to pun on the term *Flugblätter*). They were not produced for momentary, superficial and short-term purposes as devotional or secular images that one brings back from pilgrimages, to look at, to pray to, or to laugh at for a while, and then put aside or discard. They often became a part of a connoisseurial game for fairly sophisticated collectors. Moreover, it is clear that these prints were often, or in most cases, moveable items that could be folded into sets according to a religious theme, or following an arbitrarily accepted criterion, such as the rule of the peculiarities, or according to an unusual or picturesque theme.

III.2.6. Moveable and animated statues

Sometime between 1419 and 1436 in Fürstenu in Saxony a scandalous theft took place: a gilded statue of the Virgin was stolen from the local pilgrimage church. The thieves escaped to the forest and there – presumably out of fear of pursuit – they abandoned the figure. Then a miracle occurred. The statue found its way back to the church. The next day it was witnessed in its ordinary place.²⁷⁵ Faith invested in moveable and miraculous images was widely disseminated during the late Middle Ages and had little to do with the conviction propagated by Panofsky and his followers concerning the rational, theologically-sound symbolic logic of the culture of the day. Just like relics, images of the Virgin wept, bled, spoke, nodded, gave signs to the faithful or moved in miraculous ways.²⁷⁶

Such moves were not always caused merely by popular belief invested in these statues, but at times were the effect of the skilled craftsmanship that created animated figures of the Virgin. The chronicler Latomi described an image of the Virgin from the high altar of the church of Dargun Abbey (in the Schwerin region), constructed in such a way that thanks to its screws, the figure inclined towards or turned away from the faithful, depending on

275 B. Franke, “Mittelalterliche Wallfahrt in Sachsen – ein Arbeitsbericht,” in: *Spätmittelalterliche Wallfahrt im mitteldeutschen Raum*, (conference Eisleben 2002), eds. H. Kühne, W. Radtke, G. Strohmaier-Wiederanders, Berlin 2002, chapter 12.

276 J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik*, Berlin 1998 (with previous bibliography).

the size of the donation. In Bern in 1508, a Dominican friar called Steffan Boltzhurst, together with three other friars, made a Pietà figure which included a rendition of the Virgin, which wept real tears and spoke with a real voice. These skilful additions were intended to secure the veneration of the statue and ensure the status of the pilgrimage site to the church, thus providing increased revenue. The friars, accused of vicious greed and the making of a blasphemous idol, burnt the statue in 1509, and a Franciscan writer, Thomas Murner, described this “false miracle” in his *History von den vier Ketzern (The History of Four Heretics, Strasburg 1509)*.²⁷⁷ The figure of the Virgin in the Cathedral in Lübeck had a mechanism of tubes, which allowed her to weep.²⁷⁸ Luther’s *Tischreden* describes other images of the Virgin that were activated in a number of different ways: for instance the Virgin from Röth and another statue, owned by the Duke of Saxony, John Frederick, during the Peasants’ War in 1525: “I saw it, the Virgin and Child. When a wealthy man came up to the statue with his prayers, the Child turned to his mother, as if not willing to see the sinner, who in turn sought intercession with the Mother, but when he promised donations to the convent, the Child looked at him, and opened his arms to make a sign of cross over him.”²⁷⁹

With these stories we access the late medieval realm of the animated figure – moved, moveable and acting in movement.²⁸⁰

277 B. Franke, “Mittelalterliche Wallfahrt in Sachsen – ein Arbeitsbericht,” in: *Spätmittelalterliche Wallfahrt im mitteldeutschen Raum...*

278 N. Schnitzler, *Ikonoklasmus-Bildersturm, Theologischer Bilderstreit und ikonoklastisches Handeln während des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, Munich 1996, p. 266.

279 M. Luther, *WA Tischreden*, VI, 6848.

280 **Moveable and animated figures in the Middle Ages, used in or in the context of the Easter Liturgy:** G. and J. Taubert, “Mittelalterliche Kruzifixe mit schenkbaaren Armen. Ein Beitrag zur Verwendung von Bildwerken in der Liturgie,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 23, 1969, pp. 79–121; J. Taubert, “Mittelalterliche Kruzifixe mit schenkbaaren Armen. Ein Beitrag zur Verwendung von Bildwerken in der Liturgie,” in: J. Taubert, *Farbige Skulpturen. Bedeutung, Fassung, Restaurierung*, Munich 1978, pp. 38–50; M. Lisner, *Holzkruzifixe in Florenz und in der Toskana von der Zeit um 1300 bis zum frühen Cinquecento*, Munich 1970; P. Jezler, *Ostergab und Depositionsbild*, Diploma, University of Zurich 1982; P. Jezler, “Bildwerke im Dienst der dramatischen Ausgestaltung der Osterliturgie: Befürworter und Gegner,” in: *Von der Macht der Bilder, colloquium Kunst und Reformation*, Leipzig 1983, pp. 236–249; H.R. Weber, *Die Umsetzung der Himmelfahrt Christi in die zeichenhafte Liturgie*, Bern 1987; U. Haastrop, “Medieval props in the liturgical drama,” *Hafnia* 11, 1987, pp. 133–170; C. Klapisch-Zuber, “Holly Dolls: Play and

Devotion in Florence in Quattrocento,” in: her, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, Chicago 1987, pp. 310–331; H.-J. Krause, “‘Imago ascensionis’ und ‘Himmelloch’. Zum ‘Bild’-Gebrauch in der spätmittelalterlichen Liturgie,” in: *Skulptur des Mittelalters. Funktion und Gestalt*, ed. by F. Möbius, E. Schubert, Weimar 1987, pp. 281–353; P. Jezler, *Das handelnde Christusbild und seine Verwendung in der städtischen Zelebration der Herrenfeste im spätmittelalterlichen Deutschland*, in: *World Art: Themes of Unity and Diversity*, ed. by I. Lavin, London 1989, pp. 619–622; E. Lipsmayer, “Devotion and Decorum: Intention and Quality in Medieval German Sculpture,” *Gesta* 34, 1995, no. 1, pp. 20–27; J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik. Forschungen zu den Bedeutungsschichten und der Funktion des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Hoch- und Spätgotik*, Berlin 1998, 2nd edition, Berlin 2000; P. Helas, *Lebende Bilder in der italienischen Festkultur des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1999; J. Tripps, “Der Kirchenraum als Handlungsort für Bildwerke. ‘Handelnde’ Altarfiguren und hyperwandelbare Schnitzretabel,” in: *Kunst und Liturgie im Mittelalter, (Akten des internationalen Kongresses der Bibliotheka Hertziana und des Nederlandse Instituut te Rome, 1997)* ed. by N. Bock, S. de Blaauw, Ch.L. Frommel, H. Kessler, Munich 2000, pp. 235–247; J.J. Berns, *Sakralautomaten. Automatisierungstendenzen in der mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Frömmigkeitskultur*, in: *Automaten in Kunst und Literatur des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by K. Grubmüller, M. Stock, Wiesbaden 2003, pp. 197–222; M.J. Latk, “Die Inszenierung der spätmittelalterlichen Messfeierlichkeiten mit ‘blutenden’ Christusfiguren,” *Das Münster* 57, 2004, pp. 209–216; T.A. Jung, *The Phenomenal Lives of Movable Christ Sculptures*, dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park 2006; T. Jurkowlaniec, “Służ Bogu, a diabła nie gniewaj. Rzeźby gotyckie na uroczystość Wniebowstąpienia w Polsce,” in: *Artifex Doctus. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Jerzemu Gadomskiemu*, vol. I, Cracow 2007, pp. 383–391; M. Kapustka, *Figura i hostia. O obrazowym przywoływaniu obecności w późnym średniowieczu*, Wrocław 2008 (with further bibliography); J. Tripps, “‘Ein Crucifix, dem ausz den funff Wunden rotter Wein sprang’. Die Inszenierung von Christusfiguren in Spätgotik und Frührenaissance,” in: *Das Bild Gottes in Judentum, Christentum und Islam vom Alten Testament bis zum Karikaturenstreit*, ed. by E. Leuschner, M.R. Hesslinger, Petersburg 2009, pp. 117–127; K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ in the Religious Culture of the Latin Middle Ages*, Warsaw 2010 (with further bibliography); J. Tripps, “The joy of automata and Cistercian monasteries: from Boxley in Kent to San Galgano in Tuscany,” *The sculpture journal* 25, 2016, no. 1, pp. 7–28; M. Rath, *Die Gliederpuppe. Kult – Kunst – Konzept*, Berlin 2016; his, “Die Gliederpuppe. Zu Theorie und Praxis anthropomorpher beweglicher Skulptur,” in: *Gegenstand: Skulptur. Perspektiven einer Theorie*, ed. by M. Dobbe, U. Ströbele, Paderborn 2020, pp. 205–225.

III.2.6.1. Shrine Madonnas

The so-called *Shrine Madonnas* did not belong to the sphere of popular superstition, or of common faith invested in the magic power of images.²⁸¹ This was because their form had a clear theological message: they appealed to sensory reception, through forcing the viewer to open the womb of the Virgin in an act of adoration, through opening the side wings, as in a

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- 281 **Shrine Madonnas:** G. Radler, *Die Schreinmadonna "vierge ouvrante": von den bernhardinischen Anfängen bis zu Frauenmystik im Deutschordensland*, Frankfurt a.M. 1990. See also: C. Baumer, "Die Schreinmadonna in geographischer und chronologischer Ordnung," *Marian Library Studies* 9 1977, pp. 237–272; *800 Jahre Deutscher Orden*, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, Gütersloh–Munich 1990, cat. no. II.7.41; R. Kahsnitz in: *800 Jahre Deutscher Orden. Ergänzungen und Korrekturen, Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* 1992, pp. 7–50, in particular pp. 24–31; R. Kroos, "Gotes tabernackel. Zu Funktion und Interpretation von Schreinmadonnen," in: *Nobile claret opus. Festgabe für Prof. Dr. Ellen Judith Beer*, Zurich 1986, pp. 58–64; J. Nowiński, *Ars Eucharistica*. Warsaw 2000, pp. 126–127; B. Newman, "Divinizing the Virgin: The Marian Trinity in art," in: *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages*, Philadelphia 2003, pp. 254–272; I. González Hernando, "La Virgen de San Blas de Buriñondo en Bergara: ejemplo y excepción de Virgen abridera trinitaria," *Anales de Historia del Arte* 16, 2006, pp. 59–78; M. Rimmel, "Die Schreinmadonna. Bild – Körper – Matrix," in: *Bild und Körper im Mittelalter*, ed. by K. Marek, R. Preisinger, Paderborn 2006, pp. 41–59; Ch. Muck, *Les Vierges Ouvrantes, Annales de l'Académie de maçonn*, V^e série, 1, 2007, pp. 288–299; E. Gertsman, "Performing Birth, Enacting Death: Unstable Bodies in Late Medieval Devotion," in: *Visualizing Medieval Performance: Perspectives, Histories, Contexts*, ed. E. Gertsman, Aldershot–Burlington 2008, pp. 83–104; I. González Hernando, "Religiosidad cristiana: algunas reflexiones en torno al concepto de Templo de la Trinidad," *Medievalismo* 17, 2007, pp. 3–15; her, *Estudio de las vírgenes abrideras triptico. Desarrollo en la Baja Edad Media y proyección en los siglos posteriores*, dissertation, Universidad Complutense de Madrid 2008; her, "Las Vírgenes abrideras durante la Baja Edad Media y su proyección posterior," in: *Imagen y cultura. La interpretación de las imágenes como historia cultural*, ed. by R. García Mahiques, V.F. Zuriaga Senent, vol. 1, Valencia 2008, pp. 817–832; M.R. Katz, "Behind Closed Doors: Distributed Bodies, Hidden Interiors, and Corporeal Erasure in 'Vierge ouvrante' Sculpture," *Res* 55/56, 2009, pp. 194–221; I. Bango Torviso, *La Abridera de Allariz. El imaginario de la Virgen en la sociedad hispana del siglo XIII*, Murcia 2010; I. González Hernando, "La reinterpretación de la herencia artística bajo-medieval. El caso de las Vírgenes abrideras trinitarias impulsadas por la Orden Teutónica," *Anales de Historia del Arte*, 20, 2010, vol. extraordinario, pp. 211–228; M.R. Katz, *Interior Motives: The 'Vierge ouvrante' / Triptych Virgin in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia*, dissertation,

small triptych. These *Schreinmadonnen* (Eng. *Shrine Madonnas*, *Triptych Virgins*, Fr. *vierges ouvrantes*, Spa. *virgines abrideras*), which survive in sixty-five examples, open the sequence of various later moveable cult and devotional objects.²⁸² They were created from c. 1270, but mostly in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, on a very vast territory: surviving examples come from present-day Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, France, Germany, Denmark, Poland and Austria. Their form probably developed from French ivory triptychs in the form of the figure of the Virgin from the early thirteenth century (*Madonna Boubon* from Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, of which authenticity, however, just as of the dependent examples from Louvre and museums in Rouen and Lyon, is sometimes questions) [fig. 402].²⁸³ The

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- Brown University, Providence 2010; M. Rimmel, *Das Triptychon als Metapher, Körper und Ort: Semantisierungen eines Bildträgers*, Munich 2010, pp. 107–191; E. Gertsman, “The pilgrim’s progress: devotional journey through the holy womb,” in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. 2., pp. 231–259; M.R. Katz, “Marian motion: opening the body of the ‘Vierge Ouvrante,’” in: *Meaning in motion*, ed. by N. Zcholmelidse, G. Freni, Princeton, NJ 2011, pp. 63–91; I. González Hernando, *El arte bajomedieval y su proyección. Temas, funciones y contexto de la Vírgenes abrideras triptico*, Madrid 2011; M.R. Katz, “The Non-gendered Appeal of Vierge Ouvrante Sculpture: Audience, Patronage, and Purpose in Medieval Iberia,” in: *Reassessing the Role of Women as ‘Makers’ of Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. by T. Martin, Leiden 2012, pp. 37–92; A. Pinkus, “The eye and the womb: Viewing the Schreinmadonna,” *Arte medieval*, 4, 2012, no. 2, pp. 201–220; A. Pinkus, “The transformative body: seeing through the Schreinmadonna,” in: *The challenge of the object, Part 4: Congress proceedings*, ed. by G.U. Großmann, P. Krutisch, (*Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums. Wissenschaftlicher Beiband*, 32, 2013, no. 4), pp. 1207–1211; A. Pinkus, *Sculpting simulacra in medieval Germany: 1250–1380*, Farnham 2014, pp. 149–178; E. Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna*, University Park, Pennsylvania 2015; M. Rimmel, “Die Schreinmadonna. Körperlichkeit, Medienfragen und Bedeutungsschichten eines mittelalterlichen Bildes,” in: *Mittelalter*, (Kanon Kunstgeschichte. Einführung in Werke, Methoden und Epochen 1), ed. by K. Marek, M. Schulz, Paderborn 2015, pp. 193–213; D. Hammer-Tugendhat, “Vierge ouvrante,” in: *Dom Museum Wien. Kunst, Kirche, Gesellschaft*, ed. by J. Schwanberg, Berlin – Boston 2017, pp. 287–298; E. Gertsman, “Der blutige Umhang. Darstellungen des textilen Leibs der Jungfrau,” in: *Religiöses Wissen im vormodernen Europa*, ed. by R. Dürr, A. Gerok-Reiter, A. Holzem, S. Patzold, Paderborn 2019, pp. 397–429.
- 282 This number, which results from the catalogue of objects in the monograph by Gudrun Radler (1990), is given by Melissa R. Katz (2010 and 2011) – See previous note.
- 283 Cf. with the short account of the debate included by Melissa R. Katz in: *Marian motion: Opening the body of the Vierge Ouvrante*, note 11 (with further bibliography).

first actual group of the *Shrine Madonnas* is formed of ivory and wooden statues created initially, between 1270 and 1300, in the Kingdom of Castile and León, subsequently disseminated throughout the Iberian Peninsula [fig. 403]. The custom of making such sculptures survived in Spain until the seventeenth century. The largest group of such figures – also in ivory or wood – was created in various regions in France, from c. 1270 to c. 1450. Isolated examples were created in the Rhineland from c. 1300.



Fig. 402: Workshop from Sens?, *The Madonna Boubon*, c. 1200, Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery



Fig. 403: Castillian workshop?, *Virgen abrida* from Allariz, c. 1280–1300, Allariz (Orense), Museo de Arte Sacro del Real Monasterio de Santa Clara

A separate group of eleven wooden *Shrine Madonnas* commissioned by the Teutonic Order, and related statues from Scandinavia and Austria that are stylistically dependent upon them, all date to the turn of the fifteenth century.²⁸⁴ Seven were certainly created in a Prussian workshop. The *Madonna* now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, a figure of truly enormous dimensions, probably came from a Teutonic castle in Roggenhausen/Rogoźno. It measures 126cm in height, and when open it measures 103cm in width; its dimensions when the wings are closed are

284 G. Radler, “Der Beitrag des Deutschordenslandes zur Entwicklung der Schreinmadonna (1390–1420),” in: *Sztuka w kręgu zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach i Inflantach / Die Kunst in den Deutschen Orden in Preussen und Livland*, (symposium Toruń 1992), ed. by A. Bojarska, M. Woźniak, Toruń 1995, pp. 241–274; T. Dobrzeński, “Maria – Tabernaculum Dei et Verbi,” in: *Sztuka w kręgu zakonu krzyżackiego...*, pp. 275–278; *Fundacje artystyczne na terenie państwa krzyżackiego w Prusach. Sztuka w państwie krzyżackim*, ed. B. Pospieszna, exh. cat., Muzeum Zamkowe, Malbork 2010, cat. no. II.5.5 (*The Shrine Madonna* from the Church in Lubiszewo, c. 1430).

126 x 82 x 34cm [fig. 404]. Even more impressive than this is the *Madonna from Elbing/Elbląg* (160 x 120 x 80cm), which in all likelihood originally came from the Teutonic castle in Elbing (now in the Ostpreussisches Landesmuseum, Lüneburg) [fig. 405]. Other Prussian *Shrine Madonnas* are usually significantly smaller, and measure 35–45cm in height, such as the *Madonna* in the Musée National du Moyen-Âge (Hôtel de Cluny) in Paris or the *Madonna of Klonowken/Klonówka* and *Madonna of Liebschau/Lubiszewo* – both today in the Pelplin Diocesan Museum [figs. 406–408].



Fig. 404: Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna from Roggenhausen/Rogoźno*, c. 1390–1400, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 405: Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna from Elbing/Elbląg*, c. 1390–1400, Lüneburg, Ostpreussisches Landesmuseum



Fig. 406: Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna*, c. 1390–1400, Paris, Musée National du Moyen-Âge, Hôtel de Cluny



Fig. 407: Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna of Klonowken / Klonówka*, c. 1390–1400, Pelplin, Diocesan Museum



Fig. 408: Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna of Liebschau / Lubiszewo*, c. 1390–1400, Pelplin, Diocesan Museum



Fig. 409: *Shrine Madonna from Yvonand*, c. 1380, Cheyres, Notre-Dame church, stolen, copy



Fig. 410: French workshop?, *Shrine Madonna of Morlaix*, c. 1390–1400, Morlaix, Saint-Matthieu church



Fig. 411: Workshop from Rhineland, *Shrine Madonna*, c. 1300, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.185a–b)

In general, Iberian examples stress the figure and the history of the Virgin, showing episodes from her life inside the shrine itself – mostly in the sequence of the Seven Joys of the Virgin (for instance, *Virgen abrida from Allariz*, c. 1280–1300, Allariz, Museo de Arte Sacro del Real Monasterio de Santa Clara) [fig. 403].²⁸⁵ Sometimes, as in some French and Franco-Swiss examples (for instance, the *Madonna from Yvonand* c. 1380; Cheyres, church of Notre-Dame [stolen]) [fig. 409], the focus is Christological, with a depiction

285 M. Trens i Ribas, *Iconografía de la Virgen en el Arte Español*, Madrid 1947, pp. 481–524, fig. 303; C. Baumer, *Die Schreinmadonna in geographischer und chronologischer Ordnung*, pp. 252–253; M.-M. Estella Marcos, *La escultura de marfil en España románica y gótica*, Madrid 1984, pp. 128–134, fig. 32; G. Radler, *Die Schreinmadonna ‘Vierge ouvrante’ von den bernhardinischen Anfängen...*, pp. 203–209; I. Bango Torviso, “Un tipo de imagen heterodoxa? La Virgen abridera de Allariz y su tipología en la Península Ibérica,” in: *Galicia no tempo*, exh.cat., Santiago de Compostela 1991, pp. 131–148; M. A. González-García, *La Virgen Abrideira de Santa Clara de Allariz*, Ourense 1998; *Maravillas de la España medieval. Tesoro sagrado y monarquía*, exh. cat., Real Colegiata de San Isidro, León, 2000, cat. no. 184; *Alfonso X el Sabio*, ed. by I. Bango Torviso, exh. cat. Murcia 2009, pp. 346–349; I. Bango Torviso, *La Abridera de Allariz...*; I. González Hernando, *El Arte bajomedieval y su proyección...*, pp. 279–282 (with further bibliography); M.R. Katz, *The non-gendered Appeal of Vierge Ouvrante Sculpture...*

of the Crucifixion in the centre, and scenes from the life of Christ on the sides. Examples from France, the Rhineland (primarily those from the region of the Teutonic Order), show in the centre the trinitarian motif of the Throne of Grace, a theme that highlights the unity of the three divine persons: the Crucified Christ supported by God the Father, with the dove of the Holy Spirit floating in between [fig. 410]. In this way, they illustrate a fundamental and coherent theological concept. Firstly, they visualise the doctrine of the body (womb) of the Virgin as the vessel for the Incarnation and Salvation of mankind, illustrating the dogma of the Virgin as the Mother of God (*Theotokos*). Secondly, they demonstrate the concept of the virginity of her motherhood (that is, the immaculate conception of Christ in the act of the Incarnation). Thirdly, they reveal that the idea of her motherhood was included in the original divine plan, before the Incarnation (as shown in the motif of the Throne of Grace inside the Virgin's body). To these theological themes, the Teutonic examples add concepts of the maternal care of the Virgin – the Queen of Heaven and the personification of the Church (*Maria-Ecclesia*) – showing under her cloak, as if in its lining, the donors and other mortals, adoring her and the Trinity inside her womb. Thus, the Virgin is here characterised as *Mater Misericordiae* (*Schutzmantelmadonna*). It is possible that the themes chosen for the Prussian *Shrine Madonnas* were informed by the teaching of Johannes of Marienwerder (1343–1417). This Teutonic theologian was a clergyman of the Bishopric of Pomesania, the dean of the Marienwerder Chapter, and the spiritual guide of a famous mystic, Dorothea von Montau. He promoted the view of a threefold conception of Christ: the eternal from His Father (without the mother); the earthly of the Virgin-Mother (without the father); and the perpetual, renewed through the grace in the hearts of the faithful (*Mater Misericordiae*).

These types of images did raise doubts and reservations of a doctrinal nature. Jean Gerson in his sermon in 1402 wrote that they suggested that the entire Holy Trinity assumed the body from the Virgin's womb, and not merely Christ: 'I don't understand why anyone would venerate such things; in my humble view there is nothing beautiful or pious in them, they all originate from error and impiety.'²⁸⁶

Despite the origin of the *Shrine Madonnas* and their intended theological message, they always asked the viewer to engage with them physically, through touch that transgressed the physical boundaries of the Virgin's body, becoming an almost literal opening of her womb, accessing its shrine – that

286 M. Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image Making in Medieval Art*, Cambridge 1989, p. 230.

is opening the figure into two moveable wings, destined to be open and closed. Undoubtedly, most of these figures were carried to different locations, as the process of their veneration took place in various sites, on the domestic altar, in the chapel of the Castle, or, as in the case of the very small figures – during a break in a journey or whilst travelling. The inclusion in many *Shrine Madonnas* of repositories for relics and the host means that they were seen as tabernacles (*Maria Tabernaculum Dei*) and that they were used in liturgies. Presumably, they were places, as ciboria-ostensoria-tabernacles, on the altar in chapels in various castles, before large painted or partially carved retables. In any case, the surviving large-scale examples of the Prussian *Madonnas* (such as the one from Elbing or Roggenhausen/Rogoźno, figs. 404–405) certainly fulfilled the role of the altar figures in large churches of the Order, or in castle chapels. They conveyed the theological message not only during the mass, but also during communal prayers, contemplative rites, and other celebrations of the Knights' Order. Smaller figures served both as tabernacles and cult images in private services, conducted for instance for the Master (Great or Country), or for the Commander in their private, domestic chapels or residential palaces within the castle and monastic complexes. As mobile objects, they could be used during journeys and military campaigns as portable altarpieces. Finally, the fact that under the cloak of the Virgin there are portraits of the masters of the Order, depicted among monarchs and rulers, suggests that some *Shrine Madonnas* played an important role in Teutonic political propaganda. Displayed during diplomatic visits, they ingrained the image of the position of the Order among European countries; the unusual efforts of the Teutonic Knights in that respect are widely known. In all these potential contexts, the portability and the structural mobility of these figures was very useful, as it allowed them to clearly express and demonstrate the theological messages and Marian symbolism integrally connected with the Teutonic Order – or the Order's political power. These functions of the *Shrine Madonnas* were also easily adapted to the goals of other patrons, which were always similar: for instance of the Order of St. John, as in the case of the *Madonna from Liebschau*, or ducal commissions from the Rhineland, such as the *Virgin* now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York [fig. 411].



Fig. 412: Southern Netherlandish master (active in Toledo?), *Triptych of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin*, c. 1520–1525, Toledo, Monastery of Purísima Concepción

A peculiar development of the concept of the *Shrine Madonnas*, suitable for conveying a new message and promoting a new type of triumphal Marian religiosity, was a small wooden triptych, probably made by a southern Netherlandish workshop c. 1520–1525, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, preserved in Toledo, Spain in the Monastery of Purísima Concepción, known as Las Gaitanas [fig. 412].²⁸⁷ It measures 60cm in height (the figure of the Virgin – 32.3cm). The Virgin in the central chest is shown according to the Franco-Netherlandish type of *Tota pulchra* – as the Immaculata standing on the moon crescent, surrounded by the fifteen symbols of her unblemished purity and with the bust of God the Father, uttering words from the Canticles: ‘Tota pulchra es amica mea et macula non est in te’ (‘You are all beautiful, Mary, and the original stain is not in you’). The representation is complemented – following the Iberian tradition of the *Shrine Madonnas* – with specific scenes from the life of the Virgin on the wings, illustrating six of the Seven Joys of the Virgin (the seventh, namely the Assumption, is suggested through the depiction of the central figure). The main figure, as with earlier *Shrine Madonnas*, may be open: it has a moveable part to its body, and also movable arms. If you open her arms, the triptych reveals another small triptych with a Eucharistic message – the

287 *Carolus*, ed. by F. Checa Cremades, exh. cat. Museo de Santa Cruz, Toledo, Madrid 2000, cat. no. 260; M.R. Katz, *Marian motion...*, pp. 66–69 and passim.

Passion of Christ.²⁸⁸ The movement of the faithful activates the specific gesture of the Virgin: first her hands are clasped in prayer, then they open to form – the similarly pious – gesture of an orant. This action echoes the earlier action of opening – the unfolding of the wings of the actual triptych. It formulates a sequence of openings. The gesture of the opening arms of the Virgin, motivated by the viewer-operator, made real through the materiality of the mechanical construction, stimulates the viewer to meditate and join in with the prayer of the Mother of God. This communal prayer is literal, as it takes place through the touching, holding and embracing of the Virgin's body; through almost fondling her. This is necessary in order to discover how to open the triptych and animate the figure's body and limbs. Doing so finally reveals the message included inside, in her womb, which is not about the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity, as in *Shrine Madonnas*, but is related to the Passion, and therefore to eucharistic and soteriological theology.

III.2.6.2. *Statuettes of the Christ Child: figures to be clothed*

In the fifteenth and also in the first half of the sixteenth century a particular formula of a portable sculpture, the figure of a small, naked Christ Child, was developed in southern Germany. These life-size statues measured approximately 50cm. Carved in wood (mostly poplar) and painted with illusionistic polychromy, they belonged to a different category than wax, cult statuettes of the Christ Child swaddled in a manger (*Fatschenkindl*)²⁸⁹ or wax and wooden figurines of the Infant Christ placed at the altar (*Bornkinnel* from the Harz and Vogtland regions, including figures from Kamenz in Saxony from the end of the fifteenth century, and from Zwickau from c. 1520).²⁹⁰ What they share with the latter category is the tradition of their being dressed in especially sewn, festive robes. To the same group of cult images belong figures from various Italian churches,²⁹¹ for instance,

288 Melissa R. Katz knows two other similar triptychs from Castile, one previously in the Carmelite monastery in Cuerva (province of Toledo) and another in a private collection in Madrid (M.R.Katz, *Marian motion...*, see note 23).

289 *Dem Leben verbunden... Fatschenkinder. Vorträge der Tagung "Dem Leben verbunden" vom 19. November bis 1. Dezember 2002 im Kloster Seoon anlässlich der beiden Ausstellungen "Historische Fatschenkinder" und "Malerei von Eckart Hahn."* ed. by S. Hirsch, Benediktbeuren 2005.

290 G. Hummel, H.-J. Beier, *500 Jahre Bornkinnel. Sakrale Kunst aus dem Erzgebirge und dem Vogtland*, Langenweißbach 2000; A. Raithel, "Der Bornkinnel-Brauch im Erzgebirge und Vogtland," *Sächsische Heimatblätter* 38, 1992, no. 6, pp. 387–393.

291 See for instance: G. Previtali, "Il 'Bambin Gesù' come 'Immagine devozionale' nella scultura italiana del Trecento," *Paragone* 249, 1970, pp. 31–49.

the fifteenth-century figure of *Santo Bambino* from the Franciscan church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome, which according to legend was carved in wood from the Garden of Gethsemane [fig. 413] (other, later statuettes, are mostly made in wax). The wax figure of *Jezulátko* from the Church of Our Lady Victorious in Mala Strana in Prague (from the first half of the sixteenth century) is another example. Presumably, all these originate from the Italian figurines of the Christ Child placed from the fourteenth century in so-called *presepi*, which were inspired by the devotion to the Virgin and Child promoted by the Franciscans. This is manifested, for instance, in the figure by the Master of Madonna from Sant'Agostino in Perugia, carved c. 1320 from a walnut tree, which measures 42.2cm, now in the Bode-Museum in Berlin [fig. 414].



Fig. 413: *Santo Bambino*, Rome, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, copy of the 15th c. sculpture stolen in 1994

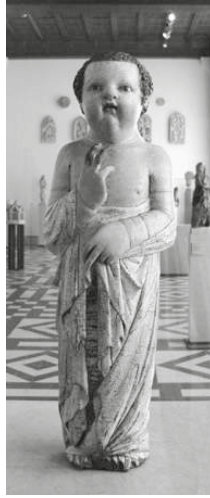


Fig. 414: Master of the Madonna of Sant'Agostino, *Christ Child (Santo Bambino)*, c. 1320, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung, Bode-Museum

The figures of the naked Christ Child were linked mostly with female devotion to Christ's childhood and to the mystery of the Incarnation, developed in a monastic milieu, mostly by Dominican and Benedictine nuns. These figures served a certain game, pious but actually secular, which focused on the physical needs of motherly compensation. The figure of Christ could be held in the hands, kissed, caressed and dressed in clothes just like an actual child. *Jésueaux* – small manger-cribs with a tiny figure of Christ – were used to put the child to sleep. This substitute for the real child were above all instruments of prayer and meditation over the Infancy of Christ [fig. 415].²⁹² All these practices formed a pious act that allowed participants to contemplate the dogma of the Incarnation. The visual culture of the nunneries was influenced also by other almost ubiquitous paintings and prints, which addressed the Incarnation and the corporeality of Christ's Infancy. These included images showing the Infant Christ and a young John the Baptist; or the Christ Child with a nun in Jesus's heart against the background of the Crucifixion; the Child giving a crown to a nun; the Infant in a basket or a crib; the Child with the *Arma Christi*, or with a spindle or a bird (not necessarily with a goldfinch); the Virgin and Child in a rosary nimbus or in other contexts. These *Nonnenarbeiten*

292 A. LeZotte, "Cradling Power: Female Devotions and Early Netherlandish *Jésueaux*," in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, pp. 59–84.

were produced, for instance, in the Benedictine Nunnery of Sankt Walburg, near Eichstätt from c. 1500. They established a sense of intimacy, domesticity, and simple sentimentality – the visual culture of *Heim und Herz*. It was a world saturated with adoration and empathy, sublimating the feeling of love, expressed for instance in prayers and meditations on the rosary, which evoked the bliss of admiration for the ‘sweet rosary,’ with an intoxicating aura of amorous infatuation. Sensory euphoria gave wings to a pious, spiritual love, thus compensating the need for physical love – erotic or maternal.²⁹³



Fig. 415: Southern Netherlandish Workshop (Brabant), *Christ's Manger-crib*, polychromed wood, gilded, with silver and lead elements, painted parchment, and silk embroidery with seed pearls, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Ruth Blumka, in memory of Leopold Blumka, 1974 (1974.121.a-d)

293 *Nonnenarbeiten, female religious communities and women piety*: J.F. Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent*, California University Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1997; G. Kaldewei, “Beginen – Susteren – Vrome Vrouwen. Zur Kulturgeschichte weiblicher religiöser Bewegungen im Spätmittelalter zwischen Mystik und Welt,” *Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte* 76, 2004, pp. 133–180; C.W. Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe*, New York 2011; I. Ippel, “A Christmas Crib as a Meek Heart of the Late Mediaeval Christian,” *Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 62, 2014, no. 4, pp. 330–347; C.W. Bynum, “Encounter: Holy Beds,” *Gesta* 55, 2016, no. 2, pp. 129–131; P. Barnet, “A Recently Acquired Christ Child at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Sculptures for Medieval Nuns,” in: *A Reservoir of Ideas: Essays in Honour of Paul Williamson*, ed. by G. Davies, E. Townsend, London 2017, pp. 203–214.



Fig. 416: Niklaus Gerhaert van Leyden, *Christ Child*, c. 1465, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 417: Gregor Erhart, *Christ Child with the Globe*, c. 1500, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe



Fig. 418: Michel Erhart (?), *Christ Child*, c. 1480, Ulm, Ulmer Museum

To these aims were used the southern German *Kinnel* – figures of the naked Christ – designed for real or imaginary care, nourishing, and dressing. The ritual included the figure being taken out from its storage place (from the sacristy cabinet or from the altar, where it could be displayed as a cult image); the nuns cleaned it from dust, placed it in the crib for the Nativity and related performances (*Krippenspielen*, the Nativity plays). Subsequently, they dressed the figurine in especially sewn clothes and displayed it on the altar during festive days. An early and important example of these sculptures is the *Christ Child with Grapes* by Nikolaus Gerhaert van Leyden from c. 1465 (height 41cm; Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum) [fig. 416].²⁹⁴ More examples of this type survive from the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the next, including the *Christ Child with the Globe* by Gregor Erhart from c. 1500, from the Cistercian convent in Heggbach in Upper Swabia (56.5cm; Ulm, Ulmer Museum; another version is in Hamburg, in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe) [fig. 417]. Particularly interesting is the figurine of Christ from Ulm (49cm; Ulmer Museum) carved by an anonymous Swabian sculptor in the last quarter of the fifteenth century (and at times attributed to Michael Erhart) [fig. 418]. The arms and elbows of this statuette are moveable; they can be bent, placed in various positions and assume different gestures, which was key to facilitating the dressing of the Child in specific robes and costumes.

III.2.6.3. *Animated and moveable figures of the Crucified and Resurrected Christ: rituals of Depositio, Elevatio and Ascensio*

Throughout almost all of Europe between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries artists carved animated wooden statues of the Crucified Christ.²⁹⁵ This trend reached the peak of its popularity around 1350 to c. 1530. The moveable parts of these statues included most frequently the arms, with flexible shoulders, and, more rarely, elbows; at times they also had legs that could be bent at the knee and ankle joints. Sometimes the head was also animated, and could be dropped down or raised depending on the desired effect [fig. 419]. At times these figures included moveable tongues and eyes. It was not unusual to place a vessel with liquid imitating blood behind the wound in Christ's side. Some statues wore wigs made from real hair and had animal

294 Ch. Metzger, “‘es muoss ein zeserlin haben...’. Überlegungen zur Funktion des Naturalismus im späten Mittelalter und ein Jesuskind von Nikolaus Gerhaert von Leyden,” in: *Menschenbilder. Beiträge zur altdeutschen Kunst*, ed. by A. Tacke, S. Heinz, Petersberg 2011, pp. 57–80.

295 See bibliography in the note 280.

skin prepared to imitate that of a human [fig. 22–23]. Examples survive that once had, or still have, an included repository for the host or relics. The figures differ in dimensions from c. 25 to 270cm, but most frequently they measured between 70 and 190cm. The largest figure of Christ is that from the Nunnery of the Cistercians in Kulm/Chełmno (the present-day Church of Saints John in the Monastery of the Sisters of the Mercy), which measures 270cm [fig. 427].²⁹⁶

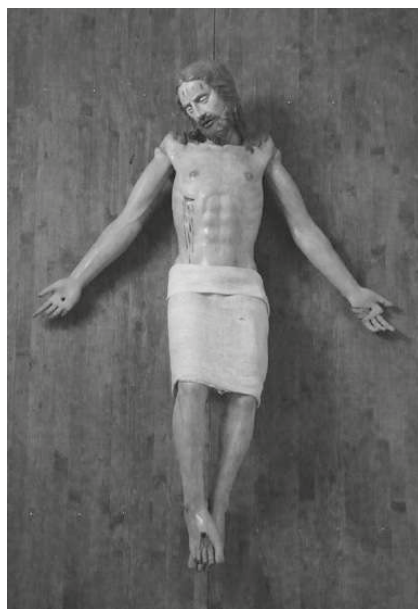


Fig. 419: Florentine sculptor, Figure of Christ with moveable arms, taken from the crucifix, end of 15th c., Pisa, Chiesa di S. Croce in Fossabanda

296 E. Pilecka, “Rzeźba ‘Chrystusa w Grobie’ z dawnego kościoła Cysterek w Chełmnie,” in: *Argumenta, articuli, quaestiones. Studia z historii sztuki średniowiecznej. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Marianowi Kutnerowi*, Toruń 2008, pp. 321–361; her, “Figura ‘Chrystusa w Grobie’ z kościoła cysterek w Chełmnie, 1340–1350,” in: *Fundacje artystyczne na terenie państwa krzyżackiego w Prusach*, ed. B. Pospieszna, exh. cat., Muzeum Zamkowe, Malbork 2010, pp. 174–175.

The surviving examples come from Italy, Spain, Portugal, German countries, Bohemia and Slovakia, with singular statues from Poland, France and the Netherlands; documents also confirm their early existence in England. Most figures survived in German countries and in central Europe. This observation has led early researchers to speculate that this sculptural genre was specific to late medieval German piety in particular, and linked with the liturgical ceremony of the *Depositio Crucis*, which took place during the Paschal Triduum. This was argued by Gesine and Johannes Taubert in their fundamental study of the phenomenon (from their article of 1969).²⁹⁷ Contributions to the field by Margrit Lisner,²⁹⁸ Elizabeth C. Parker,²⁹⁹ Hans-Joachim Krause,³⁰⁰ Volker Ehlich,³⁰¹ Andreas Schulz,³⁰² Maria José Martínez Martínez,³⁰³ and particularly monographs by Johannes Tripps (1998), Justin E.A. Kroesen (2000), Mateusz Kapustka (2008) and Kamil Kopania (2010) have added significantly to our understanding of the role of these sculptures.

Firstly, scholars have highlighted the huge popularity of these figures in Italy and Iberia. From the one hundred and twenty-six surviving examples (in fact one hundred and twenty-eight, following Kamil Kopania's recent discoveries³⁰⁴), sixty-four come from Italy, sixty from Spain and two from Portugal, whilst one hundred and three are from German regions (including

297 G. and J. Taubert, "Mittelalterliche Kruzifixe mit schenkbaeren Armen. Ein Beitrag zur Verwendung von Bildwerken in der Liturgie," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 23, 1969, pp. 79–121.

298 See above, note 280.

299 E.C. Parker, *The Descent from the Cross: Its Relation to the Extra-Liturgical "Depositio" Drama*, New York 1978.

300 See above, note 280.

301 V. Ehlich, "Der konstruktive Aufbau zweier italienischer Holzkruzifixe aus dem Bestand der Skulpturensammlung der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin," *Berichte zur Erhaltung von Kunstwerken* 4, 1990, pp. 98–106.

302 A. Schulze, "Der sogenannte Mirakelmann aus Döbeln in Sachsen, eine bewegliche Christusskulptur der Spätgotik," in: *Polychrome Skulptur in Europa. Technologie, Konservierung, Restaurierung*, eds. U. Schiessl, R. Kühnen, Dresden 1999, pp. 126–132; A. Michel, A. Schulze, "Konservierung und Restaurierung einer beweglichen Christusfigur der Spätgotik aus der Nicolaikirche zu Döbeln/Sachsen," *Denkmalpflege* 58, 2000, pp. 41–44.

303 M.J. Martínez Martínez, "El Santo Cristo de Burgos y los Cristos dolorosos articulados," *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* 69–70, 2003–2004, pp. 207–246; her, "Los crucificados dolorosos góticos y el Santo Cristo de Burgos de la iglesia de San Gil," *Codex aquilarensis: Cuadernos de investigación del Monasterio de Santa Maria la Real* 25, 2009, pp. 107–128.

304 Verbal information from Kamila Kopania, May 2012.

Austria and territories of the Teutonic Order). Archival sources note a further twenty-three moveable figures of the Crucified Christ, including twelve from Italy, four from England, six from Germany (two from Austria) and one from Switzerland. The earliest surviving examples come from the South: Italy and Spain, whereas the earliest written account (*La Seinte Resurreccion*, c. 1175) describes an Anglo-Norman northern figure. These discoveries shed new light on the origins of this sculptural genre.

Secondly, Kamil Kopania has finally systematised the numerous functions of these figures, considering the regional differences. In northern countries, mostly Germany and central Europe, figures of the Crucified Christ with moveable limbs were used during the Paschal Triduum as part of the liturgical ceremonies of the *Depositio Crucis* conducted by priests, and in their theatrical variants: the Passion plays. In Italy and Spain, these figures were used mostly by laymen (predominantly confraternities) in paraliturgical ceremonies, which had little to do with those organised in the North [fig. 420]; in turn, in England these sculptures took part in mystery plays, but known examples of their uses are very rare.



Fig. 420: *Depositio Crucis* – detail of the ceremony of the Semana Santa in Bercianos de Aliste (2014)

What was the ritual of *Depositio*, and what did it look like? Our knowledge of it is based on various texts including the *Breviarium maioris ecclesiae* from Salzburg (1160); the *Ordinaria* from the abbey of Benedictine nuns in Barkling, England (1363–1367); and the Benedictine Monastery in German Prüfening (1489); it is also based on documents related to the commissions from the Cathedral in Meissen (1513) and from the Church of All Saints in Wittenberg, the latter entitled ‘The Guidelines for Taking Down from the Cross the Image of Our Lord and Saviour, and for the Visitation of the [Holy] Tomb...’ (1517).

The deposition of the cross belonged to the series of Holy Week’s liturgical ceremonies. These included a procession on Palm Sunday (*Processio in Ramis Palmarum*), the *Adoratio Crucis* and *Depositio Crucis* on Good Friday, and the *Elevatio Crucis* on Holy Saturday or during the Easter Vigil, the *Visitatio Sepulchri* took place later on during Easter Sunday after the *Matins*, but before the *Te Deum*. The liturgy on Good Friday included Marian lamentations – *planctus*, *Marienklage*. The Paschal-Resurrection cycle was complemented by *Assumptio Domini*, which took place after forty days on the Feast of the Ascension. The most ancient of all rituals that took place during the Holy Week was the *Adoratio Crucis*, which consisted of celebrating and contemplating the image of the Crucified inside the temple. Its origins go back to the end of the fourth century, when it was recorded in the *Itinerarium Egeriae* – an account by a female penitent called Egeria of her/his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, in which the veneration by pilgrims of relics of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem is described. Likely, this ritual was already current in the sixth century, and in the seventh it became a part of a Roman rite, included in the *Ordines Romani*. The *Depositio* and the *Elevatio Crucis* are slightly later rituals, probably developed in the tenth century. The earliest description of the *Depositio* is included in the Life of St. Ulrich from c. 950, and is subsequently narrated in detail in the *Regularis Concordia* written in c. 970 by Ethelwold, the Bishop of Winchester, for English Benedictine monks. It was contemplated by later theologians, including, together with the ritual of the *Elevatio Crucis*, Jean d’Avranches, the Archbishop of Rouen, in his *Liber de Officiis Ecclesiasticis* from 1069–1079, to be subsequently included as a set element of the liturgical *ordines*.

Adoratio, *Depositio*, *Elevatio* and *Assumptio* were clearly liturgical ceremonies, even though they did not belong to the strict canon of ecclesiastical rite. They were theatricalised but without the form of a theatrical play. Only *Visitatio sepulchri* formed a liturgical drama, re-enacted by clergymen acting out specific roles. The ritual of the *Depositio* was probably developed from the *Repositio hostiae* (*Repositio sacramenti*) – the ritual of preserving sacred hosts consecrated on Maundy Thursday, which satisfied

the intensified need for communion on the day of the Crucifixion. This aspect reveals the liturgical origins of the *Depositio*, which included the deposition of the body of Christ or the crucifix in the tomb, and frequently also the consecrated host as well.

The *Depositio Christi* visualised events from the death of Christ on the cross to the entombment. The subject of the *Depositio*, a crucifix, from the end of the thirteenth century also included an independent recumbent figure of Christ, or in the case of moveable sculptures a figure that could be removed from the crucifix, after the nails were taken out and his arms folded. This was taken from the altar, (an independent figure was brought from the sacristy or repository), and bathed in wine and water; incense was burned before it in a censer, and it was then carried in a solemn procession in which the figure rested on a bier, covered by a shroud (or corporal, or chasuble), that concealed the face and the wound in the side, and was placed in the Holy Sepulchre. His body was lowered lying down, with the feet oriented to the East. Finally, the tomb – if it was an ephemeral structure, and not a permanent, stone construction, open below a baldachin or in a niche – was closed and sealed. The ceremony was accompanied by sung antiphons and responsorial hymns. Following the *Adoratio*, the liturgy took place without the consecration of the host; instead the hosts that had been consecrated on Maundy Thursday (*reposition hostiae*) were distributed during communion – the so-called *missa praesantificatorum*. Subsequently, the *Depositio* was celebrated. The priest was responsible for the actual taking down of the figure from the cross. The participants in the ceremony (but not the actors of it!) were priests, deacons, vicars, canons, and sometimes selected representatives of the laity, always under the guidance of a group of priests. Other members of the faithful only watched the ceremony and did not actively participate in it; they were witnesses to the re-enacted episode from the Passion. As mentioned earlier, in various documented instances the host was also placed in a tomb along with the figure of Christ or the crucifix. It could have already been placed in an opening, inside animatable statues of Christ (similarly to other images, which were permanently placed in a stone Holy Sepulchre; therefore, such *sepulchra* were not linked with the ritual of the *Depositio*, or the *Elevatio Crucis*). The use of the animated figure instead of a crucifix or an independent, recumbent figure of Christ added to the realism of the re-enacted biblical event. It familiarised the viewers with the drama of the Passion and with the reality of Christ's death. It visualised the true sequence of actions that had taken place on Golgotha: the viewer saw the body of Christ being taken down from the cross and carried to the sepulchre to be entombed. The earliest description of such a use of an animated figure in the ceremony of the *Depositio* comes from the *Ordinarium* of the Benedictine nuns in Barking,

near London (1363–1367), but the tradition goes back to earlier times, and probably to the twelfth century.

A specific order of the celebrations of the *Adoratio* and the *Depositio* in an elaborate formula is described in a document from Wittenberg, *Die Stiftung der abnehmung des bildnus vsers liebn herrn vnd Seligmachers vom Creutz vnd wie die besuchung des grabs von den viertzehn mansperssonen ztu Wittenberg in aller heyligen kirchen bescheen soll. 1517*. ‘On the evening of Maundy Thursday, a crucifix with the figure [*bildnuß*] of Our Lord and Saviour should be placed before the altar of the Holy Cross, placing it in a chiselled [in a pavement] hole, made by the sacristan. On Good Friday fourteen men will meet in the church of All Saints soon after the [liturgy] of the Holy Passion to take off the cross the corpus of Our Lord and just before matins, with four clergymen, they will go to the sacristy. The four clerics will wear Jewish clothing, and the fourteen men will wear white copes [...], and will hold lit candles with coat-of-arms [attached to them]. As soon as matins begins in the presbytery, these fourteen men, lined up in pairs, and behind them the four clerics, commanded by the Dean [of the Canonry] of Our Most Holy Lady, will go to take the figure off the cross./ Before they leave the sacristy the sacristan will prepare two ladders [...] and [...]a bier with shrouds [...]. And when the fourteen men will approach the crucifix with the figure, they should drop to their knees, each in one of the two rows, seven on each side, with faces turned to the figure and with outstretched hands with burning candles, to give thanks to Our Lord and Saviour. They should pray for the salvation and the well-being of our Duke and Elector of Saxony and all Christians, saying five *Our Fathers*, five *Ave Marias* and recite once the *Creed*./ The four clerics will climb the ladders and remove the figure with utmost care. They will place it on the bier, and cover it with silk drapery, so that the face of the figure will remain unveiled. Only when the figure is placed on the bier, [will] the fourteen men returning to the[ir] line-up of two rows [...], enter the choir of the Dean, to stand before the bier in the main choir [presbytery], and after them will follow the four clerics; and they will all walk around the high altar, and everything will be directed in such a way that when the bier with the figure will arrive, the prelates, canons and other clergymen, [who are] ready after matins, will stand with the candles in their hands./ During the descent from the cross twenty-two candles will be lit on the four sides of the tomb. [...]/ And when in the order described above the procession will move with the figure of Our Lord to the presbytery, they will encounter the provost and the dean, and all the clerics of the Canon [...] they will walk in pairs in a procession with lit candles from the high altar around the church, towards the back, to place the figure with the holy sacrament [host] inside the tomb. Later, after the conclusion of the ceremony, the clergymen will be divided

into seven kneeling and praying at each side of the tomb, when the figure and the holy sacrament will be placed in the tomb, and when this will be done, the clergymen will depart. The fourteen men will stand up and place the candles in fourteen brass [bronze] candlesticks [...] and with reverence they will also depart.³⁰⁵

These fourteen men were selected at the order of the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, by the mayor of Wittenberg; by the elector's bailiff in Wittenberg, the city counsellors, the rector of the University, the provost of the Parish of All Saints, and the Dean of the Canonry of Our Most Holy Lady. The selection took place on the fourth Sunday of Lent (*laetere*), and the list of the group was announced solemnly at noon of that day in the Ducal Castle. The men were *haussarme leuth* – noble poor: poor students and pupils, of impeccable moral life. They received new robes, prepared especially for the occasion and funds that enabled them to bathe, and to make a donation during the confession and the mass. On Palm Sunday they could receive alms from the citizens in a form of one herring, one loaf of bread and one pfennig. On Wednesday before the Holy Week their looks, clothes and cleanliness were monitored by the dean. On Maundy Thursday they gathered around the wax effigy of the dead Christ (*allerheiligstes Wachsleichnam*), to pray by the light of the candles they held in their hands, and each donated one pfennig, which they received earlier.

In Wittenberg these events anticipated the aforementioned celebration of Good Friday: the *Adoratio Crucis* – the adoration of the crucifix – and the *Depositio Crucis* – the taking of the figure from the altar and the placing of it in the sepulchre. Apart from the antiphons and responsorial hymns and loud prayers said for various graces, the ceremony did not include the reciting, proclaiming or singing of any texts; it did not contain any dialogues, and those responsible for the prayers – the clergymen – did not act out any roles and did not behave as actors.

In the northern Passion plays the *Depositio Crucis* adopted a different and specific form. These celebrations were no longer liturgical ceremonies, but performances recited and acted out by actors. The recited dialogues are documented in four scripts of the Passion plays from Tirol and Austria: two scripts of plays from Sterzing included in the *Debs-Codex* (a codex prepared by Tirolean painters and animators of spectacles: Benedikt Debs of Ingolstadt and Virgil Raber of Sterzing/Vipiteno and Bozen/

305 G. and J. Taubert, "Mittelalterliche Kruzifixe mit schenkbaeren Armen. Ein Beitrag zur Verwendung von Bildwerken in der Liturgie," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 23, 1969, pp. 79–121, on pp. 99–100.

Bolzano, 1510–1539)³⁰⁶ and scripts from *Kreuzabnahmespiel* from Wels (c. 1500) and from the *Passionsspiel* of the Church of St. Stephen in Vienna (written in 1687, but copying a medieval text).³⁰⁷ The protagonists in these plays were the Virgin, St. John the Evangelist, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, and sometime also the centurion who pierced the side of Christ (Longinus). The dialogues are in German, with stage instructions in Latin.

The *Kreuzabnahmespiel* from Wels includes the description of the key moment of the narrative: ‘*They take off the body and all present see [his] image [effigy] presented by the Virgin. Joseph [of Arimathea] speaks when he entombs the body: Rest here, my comforter, you saved the world from the bitter pains of hell, make a sign of Your assistance [...]. And Joseph shows the image to the Virgin and to the crowd and says: Look, Mary, at your child who rests here; you know best, how much you loved him when he was alive. The Virgin sings: Oh, [my] child, your cheeks are white, your strength and power faded away. [...] And they take the body and put it on stretcher [on a bier]. And the procession commences, and the Virgin sings her lament: Oh, dearest child of Christianity!...*’³⁰⁸ Therefore, it is the moment when the figure taken off the crucifix is placed on the lap and womb of the Virgin, as in the typical composition of a Pietà. Only a figure with the bent, lowered arms could be used in this arranged situation. After

306 G. Taubert, “Spätmittelalterliche Kreuzabnahmespiele in Wels, Wien und Tirol,” *Jahrbuch des Oberösterreichischen Musealvereines* 119, 1974, (vol. I: Abhandlungen), pp. 53–89, on pp. 69–70 and 77; G. Taubert, “Zwei Kreuzabnahmespiel aus dem Debs-Kodex,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und Literatur* 106, 1977, pp. 32–72; *Die geistlichen Spiele des Sterzinger Spielarchivs*, eds. W. Lipphardt, H.-G. Roloff, 6 vols, Bern 1981–1996; M. Schulz, *Die Oster- und Emmausspiele und das Himmelfahrtsspiel im Debs-Codex. Zur Ambivalenz christlicher und paganer Traditionen*, Göppingen 1993.

307 G. Taubert, “Spätmittelalterliche Kreuzabnahmespiele in Wels, Wien und Tirol,” *Jahrbuch des Oberösterreichischen Musealvereines* 119, 1974, (vol. I: Abhandlungen), pp. 53–89; *Kreuzabnahmespiel* from Wels: pp. 59–65 and 71–78, *Passionsspiel* from Vienna: pp. 66–68 and 76.

308 “[...] *Et sic deponunt corpuß et vna imago preasantatur / Marie ad gremium. Joseph dicit deponendo corpuß: Chum her, mein have vnd mein trost, / Dw hast dy welt nun erlost / Von der pittern helle pein / Vnd thue mier dein hillff schein [...]. Et Joseph praesentat ymaginem ad gremium Mariae et dicit: Se hin, Maria, dein chindt zu diß frist, / Dw waist woll, wie lieb es dir ym lebenn gewesen ist. Maria canit: Awe kind, dein wanglein sind dir so gar enplichen, / all dein chrafft vnd all dein macht / ist dir so gar entwichen. [...] Et sic recipiunt corpus et ponunt super feretrum [...] Et sic fiat processio: Maria postea plangit cantando: O libew chind der cristenhait!...*” Qtd. after K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ...*, pp. 60–61; Translation is mine.

this follows a description of further actions, which proceeded according to the typical format of the *Depositio*, and the script of the texts recited by cleric-actors, as spoken by the protagonists of the ceremony.

The *Passionsspiel* from the Church of St. Stephen in Vienna provides stage instructions, which describe the events: ‘Such rhymes, or dramas [*Comaedi*] about the Passion of Christ, and the service with typical ceremonies are organised in such a way that they are interrupted and suspended for a moment, after which follows the procession with the Most Holy [Sacrament] to the Holy Sepulchre, in which participate the canons, various cavaliers [noblemen] and ladies and the entire magistrate, aristocrats, and all sworn brothers and sisters of the Confraternity of Corpus Christi, with burning torches and lit candles./ Behind the Most Holy [Sacrament] four priests dressed in Levitical clothes, Nicodemus and a servant [actors] carry Our Lord on a stretcher, taken off the cross, which stands on a podium; on the sides walk numerous children in black robes with black veils on their heads; on the gilded posts they carry lanterns with burning candles. Behind the moveable bier, or stretcher, walk the personas of the said drama, followed by twenty-four women in white veils that cover them entirely, who hold lamps with candles. Meanwhile, when the procession walks around the cemetery, a podium is brought to the church and the Holy Sepulchre is wheeled inside [...], created in ancient times, and stored during the rest of the year behind a large door in a cellar in the cemetery, [it bears] an inscription [...]: Com plenum est hoc Sepulchrum D.N.J.C.A° 1437./ At that time the procession arrives at the church, and circles once around the interior, and when it reaches the Holy Sepulchre [...], Our Lord is entombed there, carried on the bier, and before him, the Most Holy [Sacrament] is placed inside the tomb’.³⁰⁹

In these dramatized, theatrical performances figures of Christ with moveable arms played a key role; without them the sequence of events described above would not be possible. It could not be replaced by recumbent figures of Christ with static limbs, of which numerous examples survive from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (for instance, *Christ in the Tomb* from the Franciscan Church in Toruń/Thorn, c. 1400) [fig. 421]. The latter type of figure – contrary to what is at times described in the literature³¹⁰ – did

309 G. and J. Taubert, “Mittelaterliche Kruzifixe mit schenkbaren Armen. Ein Beitrag zur Verwendung von Bildwerken in der Liturgie,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 23, 1969, pp. 79–121, on pp. 117–118.

310 M. Jakubek-Raczkowska, J. Raczkowski, “Gotycka figura Chrystusa w Grobie i jej miejsce w przestrzeni liturgicznej kościoła franciszkanów w Toruniu,” in: *Dzieje i skarby kościoła mariackiego w Toruniu*, ed. by K. Kluczajd, Toruń 2005, pp. 181–202.

not satisfy the needs of the liturgical narrative of the *Depositio*: in this instance one would have to only act out the taking of the figure off the crucifix, or pretend to remove the statue from the cross at the altar, and cover the figure behind some drapery to hide it from the eyes of the faithful, and carry the said recumbent figure of Christ to the tomb. These sculptures – almost always monumental in scale (the one from Toruń measures 2.5 meters!) – were used as images of Christ in stationary structures of the Holy Sepulchre, framed by a sculptural, multifigural composition, which was not used in the *Depositio Crucis*.



Fig. 421: *Christ in Tomb*, c. 1400, Thorn/Toruń, Franciscan Church

The animated figures of Christ in Spain, Italy and in England functioned differently from the examples in German regions and in Central Europe.

In Iberia and in Italy such figures appeared earlier than in the North, before the second half of the fourteenth century, and in large numbers. The Italian crucifixes or figures include examples from: the church of San Domenico in San Miniato (1270–1280); the Cathedral in Tolentino (second half of the thirteenth century); the Pinacoteca Comunale in Spello (end of thirteenth or early fourteenth century); the church of San Pietro Apostolo in Castelfranco di Sotto (1310–1320); the Galleria Nella Longari in Milan and the Palazzo Santi in Cascia (first quarter of the fourteenth century); the Cathedral in Siena (1330s); the Cathedral in Florence (1339), and the

church of Sant'Andrea in Palaia (1340). In Spain and Portugal, such crucifixes and figures include: statues from Mig Aran and Taüll (Tahull) and *Cristo de los Gascones* from the church of San Justo in Segovia [fig. 422] (all from the twelfth century); a figure now in the Museu Grão-Vasco in Viseu (from the twelfth or thirteenth century), from z Liria, Toro and Aguilar de Campóo (thirteenth century); another from San Pedro Félix de Hospital do Incio in Lugo (from the end of the thirteenth century) and many examples from the fourteenth century, including: the crucifix from the Cathedral in Orense (1330), *Cristo de Burgos* from the Cathedral in Burgos (second quarter of the century), from Tui (mid-fourteenth century), from Palma de Mallorca and from Villalcampo. Other examples date from the fifteenth century: from Arrabal de Portillo, Castillo de Lebrija, Esguevillas de Esqueva, Fisterra, Palencia, Vilabade.³¹¹ In Spain during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the ceremonies of the Holy Week did not have the form of a ritual of the *Depositio Crucis*, whilst in Italy it took place very rarely. Therefore, the early popularity of animatable figures of Christ cannot be explained from their role in the ceremony on Good Friday, as in the North. Their use was completely different.

311 See catalogue in: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ...*, pp. 277–281.



Fig. 422: *Cristo de los Gascones*, 12th c., Segovia, San Justo church



Fig. 423: *Deposizione* from Vicopisano, Pieve di Santa Maria, early 18th c.

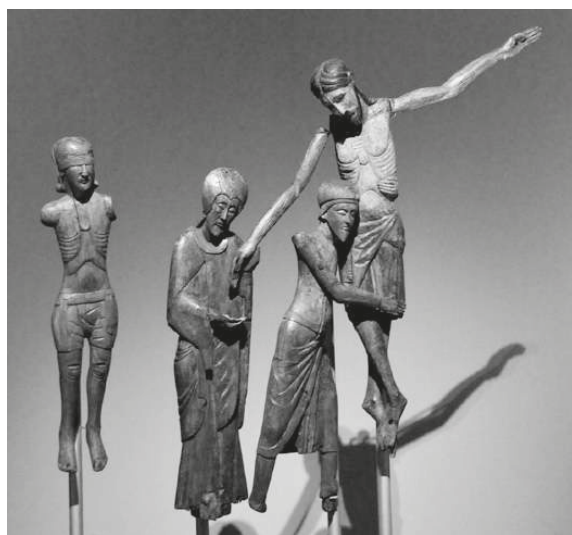


Fig. 424: *Descendimiento* from Santa Maria de Taüll/Tahull, end of 12th c., Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the South monumental wooden sculptural groups were created to show the Descent from the cross with Christ and accompanying figures of the Virgin, St. John, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and sometimes the good and bad thieves; thirty-three examples survive in Italy and thirty in Spain [fig. 423–424].³¹² They were executed for cathedrals and for parish and monastic churches, in particular those of the Benedictine and Augustinian orders. Therefore, they were common and not limited to a certain milieu. Most frequently, the figure of Christ was treated in a standard way, as in all representations of the Descent from the cross: hanging straight from the cross, or slightly inclined to the side, at times with his head dropped down, with one shoulder hanging limply and the other still nailed to the cross (for instance: the *Deposizione* from Vicopisano, and the *Descendimiento* from San Juan de las Abadesas in Girona), or with two arms dropped at an angle (for example: *Deposizioni* from Montone, Tivoli, Volterra or *Descendimiento* from Erill la Vall in the Museu Episcopal de Vic in Barcelona). Some *Descendimientos* – from Santa Maria de Taüll/Tahull (end of the twelfth century, Barcelona, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya) and from Santa Maria in Val d’Aran (twelfth century, now in Mig Aran, Val d’Aran, Sant Migièl de Niella) – included figures of Christ with moveable arms. The Spanish groups of the descent from the cross were used for adoration of the tormented Christ and saints during Holy Week. It was a passive adoration, without re-enactments of the narrative, and only at times were the

312 **Monumental groups of the Descent from the Cross. Spain:** B. Schällicke, *Die Ikonographie der monumentalen Kreuzabnahmegruppen des Mittelalters in Spanien*, Berlin 1975; X. Dectot, “L’iconographie monumentale de la Passion du XI^e au XIII^e siècle,” in: *Catalogue romane. Sculptures du Val de Boï*, ed. by J. Camps and Sòria, X. Dectot, exh. cat., Musée National du Moyen-Âge, Paris – Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya, Barcelona 2004–2005, Paris–Barcelona 2004, pp. 61–69 (see also catalogue notes on pp. 80 and 92). **Italy:** *La Deposizione lignea in Europa. L’immagine, il celto, la forma*, ed. by G. Saponi, B. Toscano, (including: exh. cat., Museo comunale di San Francesco, Montone 1999, and conference proceedings: *La Deposizione di Montone, problemi e significati dei gruppi lignei*, Montone, Teatro di San Fedele, 1999), Perugia 2004; *Il teatro delle statue, gruppi lignei di Deposizione e Annunciazione tra XII e XIII secolo*, (conference: *Attorno ai gruppi lignei della Deposizione*, Museo Diocesano, Fondazione Sant’ Ambrogio – Università cattolica del Sacro Chore, Milan 2003), ed. by F. Flores d’Arcais, Milan 2005; C. Bino, *Dal trionfo al pianto. La fondazione del ‘teatro della misericordia’ nel medioevo (V–XIII secolo)*, Milan 2008.

Planctus (laments of the Virgin) and other Passion songs sung. Sometimes the figure of Christ had in its back a container for the host or the relics of the cross, for instance, in the statue from the Benedictine church of San Pedro in Siresa (twelfth century). The moveable arms and limbs of Christ permitted the placement of the statue in different arrangements, from the Crucifixion, through the Descent from the cross, to the Entombment. They were displayed in the west entrance to the church, where, as in the Cathedral in Girona, the Holy Sepulchre was located and the *Visitatio Sepulchri* took place. At times these statues were placed in separate chapels of the Holy Sepulchre, as in the church of San Justo in Segovia. The surviving animated figure of the twelfth-century *Cristo de los Gascones* from that church [fig. 425], includes a container for the relics and was not a part of a larger group, but it was displayed independently on the high altar against the background of apsidal paintings that depicted the *Maiestas Domini* and scenes from the Passion. It was used as a key reference point for the theatrical celebration of Holy Week, which took place in the organ loft and in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, and which showed the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross and the Resurrection. The Crucified Christ was adored and taken off the cross, placed in the tomb, and after the Resurrection (which was not re-enacted) the empty sepulchre was inspected by the three Marys, as a part of the *Visitatio Sepulchri* spectacle. Both fourteenth-century and subsequent sources describe these ceremonies as *juegos de la fiesta* – ‘festive games’. This points to their status as not only liturgical but also theatrical events. The Iberian sources do not describe the liturgical rituals of the Holy Week, such as those that took place in the North, and list only the *Visitatio Sepulchri* spectacle. The popularisation in Spain between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of the figures of Christ with moveable arms and limbs, should be associated with the twelfth- and thirteenth-century tradition of the adoration of sculptural groups of the Entombment, and also with the non-liturgical Holy Week performances, which subsequently transformed into processions, organised during the *Semana Santa*.

The monumental groups of the Entombment in Italy, and the figures of Christ with moveable arms, had a different function. As in Spain, they were used in quasi-theatrical performances of the Passion and the Resurrection, but they were organised and re-enacted by lay confraternities rather than by the clergymen, and did not reflect the strict chronology of the Passion narrative (the Crucifixion, the Descent from the cross and the Entombment), but they included the singing of the *laude*, lyrical songs describing and commenting on episodes from the life of Christ, the Virgin and other saints (these should not be confused with the morning *laudes* – prayer services listed in the hourly liturgical calendar). At times

they assumed a form of para-theatrical narrative or even of an acted-out drama with different roles. The lauds performed during Holy Week were focused mostly on the suffering (*compassio*) of the Virgin during the torments, and after the death of, her Son; they included the motifs of the lamentation of the Virgin. In Italy, they were formed by confraternities dedicated to the performing of the lauds: the *laudesi* and the *disciplinati*. The earlier confraternity of the *laudesi* originally only sang lauds; from the fourteenth century they adopted a theatricalised form, and the *disciplinati*, or flagellants developed the theatrical formula from the outset. The evangelical, missionary and devotional role of the lauds was promoted from the mid-thirteenth century by the Italian mendicant orders, and most importantly by the Franciscans, which helped the development of the theatrical formula among the urban confraternities. In the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, the *laude* were sung and played not only inside the church, but were also performed on the streets outside. The natural setting for these performances were the monumental, sculptural groups with the Descent from the cross, or, more rarely, the Entombment. But these figures, which were not animated, did not allow the narrative to be re-enacted through them. This need was satisfied by the figures of Christ with moveable limbs. No actor playing or singing the lauds could act as Christ. This function was assumed by a wooden, animated figure. The inclusion of the statue to the static, sculptural representation allowed the entire group to be activated; to change it into the *teatro delle statue*; to adapt the arrangement of the figures to the narrative situation, divided into various episodes. This recalls the role of the animated figures of Christ from the twelfth-century Spanish *Descendimientos* (Taüll, Mig Aran); but in Italy, this adjustment took place much later, towards the end of the thirteenth century. The statues of Christ from Tolentino (second half of the thirteenth century, the Cathedral of San Catero); Cascia (early fourteenth century, Museo di Palazzo Santi, originally from the Church of Santa Maria, with moveable arms) or from Valvasone (end of the fifteenth century, the private collection, with moveable shoulders, elbows and hips and knees), were suited to re-enacting the taking of the 'body' off the cross and the carrying of the figure to the tomb on a bier during the Paschal procession around the church, and then through the streets of the city. The mobility of the arms and, at times, of the legs permitted the figure to be placed on the lap and womb of the Virgin, and to reconstruct the moment of the Lamentation, forming the Pietà group, which complements the singing of the lauds based on the laments of the Virgin. The moveable tongue allowed Christ's speech to St. John and to the Virgin standing at the cross, and the last words he spoke before His death to be mimicked (for instance, in the figure from the circle of Giovanni Tedesco from San Francesco in Terni, currently in the

local Pinacoteca Comunale).³¹³ Similarly, the animated heads (for instance the figure of Christ from the workshop of Andrea di Ugolino Pisano, now in Berlin, Bodemuseum, Skulpturensammlung) enhanced the rhetoric of movement. The figure replaced the real actor, excluded from the narrative. Together with the rearrangement of the figures, the *laude* became closer to spectacles, the so-called *sacre rappresentazioni*, that were characteristic of the fifteenth century. From that time date the majority of Italian figures with moveable limbs. This type of representations of the Italian lauds and the *sacre rappresentazionizi* crossed over into Spain in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, where many ceremonies of Holy Week were based on the model of theatrical lauds, or assumed the character of the processions organised by lay confraternities.

The use of these moveable figures in England, known to us through only a few, literary sources, was utterly different. The first, and the earliest account of animated figures in Europe is *La Seinte Resureccion*, dated c. 1175, and written in Anglo-Norman (a Norman variation of the Old French) within an English milieu, probably in the Diocese of Canterbury.³¹⁴ The descriptions of the performed events and the transcriptions of dialogues demonstrate that it was not a ceremony similar to the liturgical *Depositiones Crucis* already described, but an actual theatrical spectacle, similar to mystery plays. It had a very complex narrative and staging: to perform the entire story, which included forty-two episodes, fourteen different sets were required; undoubtedly the narrative extended beyond the church interior into the city. It did not include Christ's words and there was no actor to perform His role. Presumably, it was only in the episodes that are not included in the written text but are mentioned in the prologue – the scenes of the Descent into the Limbo, the Supper at Emmaus and the meeting at the Sea of Galilee – that an actor who played Christ appeared. In earlier episodes, from the Crucifixion to the Resurrection, the figure of Christ is present but silent, presumably in the form of an animated effigy. Certainly, it was indispensable to the episodes mentioned in the text: the piercing of Christ's side by Longinus, the Descent from the Cross and the Entombment.

313 Cf. Z. Sarnecka, "The Identity of Wooden Crucifixes in the Culture of the Fifteenth-Century Umbria," *Arte Medievale*, IV, 2014, pp. 209–230.

314 Text: *La Seinte Resureccion, from the Paris and Canterbury MSS*, eds. T. Atkinson Jenkins, J.G. Wright, J. M. Manly, M.K. Pope, (Anglo-Norman Text Society 4), Oxford 1943. Description and analysis – K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of Crucified Christ...*, pp. 70–81 and 158–162 (with further bibliography).

Another, similar, source – *Christ's Burial* – is late and dates from c. 1518.³¹⁵ This performance was to take place not within the city itself, as with *La Sainte Resurreccion*, but inside a church, known because the text is included in a chronicle of an unknown Carthusian Monastery, and was used by the monastic congregation living there. The narrative starts from a mourning monologue spoken by Joseph of Arimathea and the lament of the three Marys. Mary Magdalene describes to Joseph the Crucifixion and the despair of the Virgin at the cross. Nicodemus and Joseph take the body off the cross. The Virgin and John the Evangelist arrive. The body is placed on the lap and (therefore) womb of the Virgin, who weeps over it. John, Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathea ask the Virgin to give the body to them for burial in the sepulchre. Mary Magdalene departs to bring ointments and embalm the corpse. Joseph and Nicodemus repeat Christ's promise, that He will be resurrected in three days. For subsequent episodes – especially in the Descent from the Cross and the Lamentation – the animated figure of Christ was undoubtedly required to substitute the living actor, absent from this play.

No other, similar texts survive from England that would fill the chronological gap between the twelfth and the early sixteenth century. Does this mean that mystery plays were rare in England, or is the opposite true: that the tradition was alive from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries? It is therefore impossible to determine whether the animated figures of Christ were widely used in these performances, even more so since no sculpture of that kind has survived from the territory (perhaps due to the Protestant iconoclasm of the sixteenth century). Their existence is only confirmed by scant written accounts (the *ordinarium* from the Benedictine Nunnery in Barking, near London, 1363–1367; and the note about a figure from the Cistercian Abbey in Boxley, destroyed in 1538), and what may be assumed about their role in the aforementioned plays, which can be deduced from the scripts.

It is traditionally accepted, from the studies carried out by Gesine and Johannes Taubert in the 1960s, that the animated figures of Christ were used exclusively in liturgical plays and theatrical re-enactments during Holy Week. But this is not entirely correct. Thanks to the pioneering work of Kamil Kopania this generalised view has been nuanced and rectified. He

315 Text: D.C. Baker, J.L. Murphy, L.B. Hall, *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian MSS Digby 133 and E. Museo 160*, London 1982, pp.141–168. Discussed by: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of Crucified Christ...*, pp. 81–83 and 160–162 (with further bibliography).

analysed a series of German and southern examples and has demonstrated the role of these figures beyond the festive period of Holy Week.³¹⁶

An account from c. 1501 confirms that a crucifix bearing a figure of Christ with animated limbs could have additional functions. In that year, Baccio da Montelupo created such a crucifix for the pilgrim confraternity of Christ (*Compagnia di Gesù Pellegrini*), active at the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence. It has survived *in situ*, and since it is animated, the figure was undoubtedly used during the ceremonies of Holy Week. It was sufficiently large (94cm) to also be used as a processional cross, which is described in the archival document of the confraternity: *è da portar fuori, quando si va a processione* – ‘and to be taken out during the procession.’ Processions with the cross also took place in that church on occasions other than adoration during Holy Week, and at the re-enactment of the Descent of the Cross. Furthermore, the documents clearly show that the crucifix was also the altar cross, permanently displayed in the oratory of the confraternity. The role of the stationary altar cross and the moveable processional cross did not preclude the occasional use of the figure, which could be taken off the cross and have its arms folded in the Holy Week ceremonies. This was probably common to other Italian animated crucifixes of sufficiently large dimensions carved for confraternities, including three other sculptures from Baccio da Montelupo’s workshop: from the sacristy of the cathedral in Arezzo, from San Francesco al Bosco ai Frati in Mugello and the Skulpturensammlung Bodemuseum in Berlin. To this category also belong figures of Christ from Santo Spirito in Florence, the Cathedral of San Vincenzo in Prato, and the chapel in the Villa della Petraia near Florence. However, the function of the altar and processional crucifixes could also be assumed by animated sculptures from Germany and Central Europe – these, that did not exceed 100cm, which is neither too small, nor too large or heavy, to carry.

Some – mostly Italian – figures on the crucifixes did not have moveable arms, but instead animated heads, tongues, or jaws, activated through a mechanism with a rope to the back of the figure. It is in such a way that figures by Giovanni Tedesco and his circle were constructed, such as those from Pordenone (the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli del Cristo, 1466); Norcia (Santa Maria Argentea, c. 1494); Terni (from the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, now in the Pinacoteca Comunale); Rimini (Museo della Città); or Pietrarossa (Santa Maria). Moreover, the figure from Santa Madonna in Porcia, or the figure of unknown provenance (perhaps northern?), at one

316 K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of Crucified Christ...*, chapter V, pp. 163–185.

time in the Piraud collection in Paris had moveable eyes and jaw. Without moveable arms they could not be employed in re-enactments with *lauds* or in *sacre rappresentazioni* dedicated to the Descent from the Cross and the Entombment. At the same time, the mobility of their heads and other parts was designed for a reason. Hypothetically, they were used – as the figure of the bad thief with moveable head, tongue and eyes, now in the Musée National du Moyen-Âge (Hôtel Cluny) shows – to illustrate a lesson (a passage read out loud from the Bible) or a sermon, being placed on the pulpit (smaller figures) or by it (the larger ones) to do so. Kopania suggests that the larger examples, such as those created in the workshop of Giovanni Tedesco, functioned as objects of the emotional cult and meditative devotion developed by the mendicant orders, mostly the Dominicans and Franciscans. They acted as ‘miraculous images,’ and their imitative naturalism forced the viewer to empathise with the suffering Christ. In this capacity, they had to be displayed permanently in the church throughout the entire liturgical year.

Originally, many, if not most, of these animated crucifixes – whether from Germany, Spain or Italy – were displayed permanently inside the church beyond Holy Week, where the faithful had a continuous and unrestricted view of them. They were placed in chapels and oratories (for instance, in the chapel at the Castle in Schneidheim, the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre in San Justo in Segovia, and a similar chapel in the Franciscan church of San Bartolomeo in Marano); in the nave or in the apse (as in the Cathedral in Orense, or in the church of Sant’Andrea in Palaia), or on the rood beam dividing the nave from the presbytery (as in the Benedictine church in Hronský Beňadik, Slovakia). In this role, apart from the temporary use in the *Depositio Crucis* and the Passion and Resurrection plays, the crucifixes became permanent, devotional objects designed for prayer, meditation and contemplation.

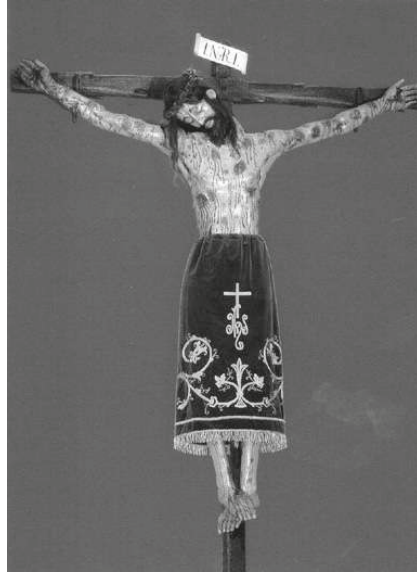


Fig. 425: *Cristo de Burgos*, second quarter of the 14th c., Burgos Cathedral

At times they were also strictly devotional objects. This role was played – and still is now – by an early *Cristo de Burgos* (second quarter of the fourteenth century, Cathedral in Burgos, originally the Monastery of San Agustín): an object of a pilgrim cult, celebrated for the miracles attributed to it [fig. 425]. According to a legend, it was the crucifix carved by Nicodemus, who became the forefather of all sculptors, as St. Luke was the patron of painters.³¹⁷ The old story, from the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine (fourteenth century), described how Nicodemus made a miraculous figure of the Crucified Christ, and as a witness of the Crucifixion, he knew how to depict the physiognomy and bodily structure accurately. He carved it in wood from the Holy Cross, or, as in another version, he made the cross from an oak tree, and the figure from Lebanon cedar. Following the carving of the body, he stopped, unable to give the true likeness of the Holy Face. He prayed for divine guidance, until he fell asleep. When he woke up he found the sculpture finished; Christ’s face had been miraculously carved

317 C. Schleif, “Nicodemus and Sculptors: Self-reflexivity in Works by Adam Kraft and Tilman Riemenschneider,” *The Art Bulletin* 75, 1993, no. 4, pp. 599–626.

by angels. Therefore, the legendary sculpture was an *acheiropoietos*, like a few other famous image-relics (the Mandylion, the Veraikon, Madonnas painted by St. Luke *etc.*). Before his death, Nicodemus gave the sculpture to a pious man, Issachar. The relic was stored in the Holy Land, and in 765 it was desecrated by the Jews in Beirut. Subsequently, it was venerated there until when in the 1180s Saladin chased the Crusaders out of the city. At that time Bishop Wilfried (Gualfredo) came to the site, where the relic was stored and was granted a vision in his sleep, in which an angel revealed to him the presence of the True Cross in the relic. Wilfried understood this as a sign to save the figure from the pagans, and to move it to a secure location, where it could be publicly venerated. From that point the legend continues in many different versions. One story describes how the figure (or a crucifix) was embedded into a tree trunk and dropped into the sea, but that through divine intervention it was found (or bought from someone else who found it) by a pious merchant called Pedro Ruiz de Minguijuán during his journey to Flanders. He gave it to the city of Burgos and to the local convent of St. Augustine. Hence, the belief that *Cristo de Burgos* is the miraculous figure carved by Nicodemus. According to another legend, the figure together with ampullae containing the blood of Christ sailed away on a boat to Jaffa, but God's providence directed the boat, so that, after a long journey, it finally reached the area of the city of Luna. The inhabitants wanted to come near the figure, but they could not as the access to the boat was miraculously protected. Only the Bishop of Lucca, Giovanni, famous for bringing holy relics to the city, was able to approach the statue. The inhabitants of Luna received one ampulla with the Holy Blood, the second together with the figure of Christ was taken to Lucca, where the crucifix was venerated as a famous relic: the *Volto Santo*. Yet another legend identifies Nicodemus's sculpture with the *Batlló Crucifix* (from the name of the collector Enrico Batlló) – a Roman twelfth-century crucifix, now preserved in the Museo Nacional de Arte de Cataluña, Barcelona.

The *Cristo de Burgos* – as an *acheiropoietos* and an image performing many miracles, was described by various literary sources as a means of protection from plagues and diseases, and of taking care of Christians imprisoned by the Saracens – it was an object of constant adoration in the Augustinian convent, and later in the Cathedral, but it was not used for theatrical performances. Instead, the figure formed an important stage on the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Its moveable limbs (the head, arms, and the blood spilling out from the container behind the wound in its side); the calf and sheep skin, which imitated the human skin, the natural hair, the nails from a horn – all this enhanced the naturalism and increased the illusion of the miraculous image's corporeality.



Fig. 426: Donatello, *Crucifix*, c. 1415, Florence, Santa Croce

Similarly, the animated figure of the Crucified Christ from the Franciscan basilica of Santa Croce in Florence, carved by Donatello c. 1415 [fig. 426], as demonstrated by John T. Paoletti (1992), was a cult image that visualised the sacred body of the tormented Christ.³¹⁸ However, it was not placed on the altar, raised high above the faithful, but instead was placed low down, directly on a pavement in the middle of the church, on the wall of the choir screen, decorated by a fresco by Taddeo Gaddi. The figure was facing the viewer; placed at his or her eye level, it confronted the believer with the complete illusion of Christ's physicality, revealed also in the statue's natural dimensions (height 168cm). Thus, the function of the cult image was merged with that of a devotional object, and the statue encouraged the faithful to pious meditation and prayer, at times even forcing them to empathise with the suffering Christ, through direct contact and identification with the Saviour. This position of the cult statue of the Crucified could be easily transformed into a devotional image: after the removal of the nails from the cross and the folding of the arms, the figure became similar to

318 J.T. Paoletti, "Wooden sculpture in Italy as sacral presence," *Artibus et historiae* 13, 1992, no. 26, pp. 85–100.

an *Imago Pietatis* – the image of the Man of Sorrows (*Vir dolorum*) to pray and meditate upon – perfectly meeting the needs of typical Franciscan piety. In this manner, the statue also illustrated the Passion narrative, from the Crucifixion, the Descent of the cross to the Entombment, whilst the construction of the crucifix enabled the use of the figure for occasional re-enactments during Holy Week.



Fig. 427: Figure of Christ from the Cistercian Nunnery in Chełmno, third quarter of the 14th c., Chełmno, Convent of the Sisters of Mercy

The figure of Christ from the Nunnery of the Cistercians in Kulm/Chełmno (the present-day Convent of the Sisters of Mercy, dated to the third quarter of the fourteenth century) must also have played the role of a devotional image, which appealed to the emotionally-driven empathy, and to the sphere of mystical experiences, that were promoted within the context of late medieval female convents [fig. 427].³¹⁹ It has moveable arms, and an opening in the head under the crown of thorns, closed with a plaque, that was designed to contain the host or relics, as well as circular holes around the wound in the side (presumably these were for the containers for imitating the blood). In all likelihood, the figure originally functioned not only during the ceremony of the *Depositio Crucis*, during the Holy Week liturgy, but was an object of constant adoration as a ‘reliquary’ of holiness (the container for the host and relics), which at the same time imitated the reliquary for the Holy Blood. The devotional role of the figure merged with its cultic function, as a visualisation of the sacred during its permanent

319 E. Pilecka, “Rzeźba ‘Chrystusa w Grobie’ z dawnego kościoła cysterek w Chełmnie...”

display (in the cloister of the convent, or perhaps on the altar) and the adoration during the liturgy of the *Depositio Crucis*.

This function seems to have been shared by German animated figures of the Crucified Christ, which featured containers for relics and the host. This is seen for instance, in examples from the Benedictine Monastery in Göttweig (c. 1380) and the parish church in Maria Wörth (early sixteenth century).



Fig. 428: *Mirakelmann* from Döbeln – figure of Christ from the abbey of Benedictine nuns in Döbeln, c. 1510, Döbeln, Sankt Nikolai church

The so-called *Mirakelmann* from Döbeln, likely from the local abbey of Benedictine nuns (now in the Lutheran church of Sankt Nikolai) [fig. 428],³²⁰ is a large puppet measuring 190cm. It has moveable arms, with flexible elbows and shoulders, and legs that are bendable in the hips; the head can also be animated. In its back, it has a container for blood, linked with Christ's wounds; it is covered with a parchment imitation of skin and it has a partially surviving natural beard and hair. Certainly, the statue was used as the figure of Christ in the ceremony of the *Depositio Crucis*, but it could also be an object of continuous cultic devotion, though this has not been confirmed by any sources. Who knows whether the statue did not function as a puppet in spectacles, or as an object of constant devotion – as did a figure of Christ from from Valvasone in the north of Italy, (private collection, end of the fifteenth century), which also had two limbs that could be flexed at different joints, and was also once covered by an imitation of skin.

320 A. Schulze, "Der sogenannte Mirakelmann aus Döbeln in Sachsen...;" J. Tripps, "Ein Crucifix, dem ausz den funff Wunden rotter Wein sprang...," pp. 117–127.

The animated figures of the Crucified Christ had numerous functions. They could act as substitutes for the real actors in the Passion and the Resurrection performances, they acted in Italian and Spanish re-enactments with lauds and *sacre rappresentazioni*, they were included in the rituals of *Adoratio* and *Depositio Crucis* in the north of Europe; they constituted objects of adoration in sculptural groups of the Descent from the cross, were adored as independent cult or devotional images, and at times became ‘miraculous images,’ attracting pilgrims and being venerated by them.

The moveable (in the sense of portable) figures were used in other moments of liturgical ceremonies during Holy Week and the Feast of the Ascension.

Following the *Depositio Crucis*, late at night on the Holy Saturday or during matins on the Sunday of the Resurrection, a ritual of the *Elevatio*, the Raising of the Cross, took place, which consisted of the extraction of the crucifix or the figure or the host from the tomb. The crucifix carried in a procession was brought back to the altar, the recumbent figure of Christ in the tomb was replaced by the figure of the Resurrected Saviour, placed on the altar, where it remained until the Feast of the Ascension and the ritual of *Ascensio Domini*; the host was placed in the tabernacle. This took place only in the presence of the clergymen of a certain church. More recently, the tradition was transformed into the procession of the Resurrection, in which all faithful can participate. The substitute statuettes of the Resurrected Christ, designed to be taken out of the tomb, are documented from the fourteenth century in Germany and are called *Urstant-Figuren* (from *Auferstehung* – the Resurrection). In general, they are small, measuring between 10 and 20cm, which was determined by the necessity of placing them in the Holy Sepulchre earlier, in such a way that they were not visible to the faithful.

At times the *Elevatio Crucis* was linked with the re-enactment of the *Descensus ad inferos* – the *Descent into Limbo*, which took place most commonly during or before the procession, though occasionally this element was introduced before matins on the Sunday of the Resurrection. The procession that carried the crucifix and the figure of Christ removed from the tomb was accompanied by the quiet singing of an antiphon or a responsorial hymn, *Cum rex gloriae*; they approached the doors of the chapel or a room, behind which were actors playing Adam and Eve, as well as prophets and patriarchs imprisoned in limbo. The knocking on the doors three times with the foot of the cross, and the singing of the antiphon *Tollite portas*, symbolised the Harrowing of Hell and the salvation of the souls. In the Benedictine monastery in Barking, near London, the nuns and clerics, acting as the Old Testament figures, were closed in a chapel; after the antiphon was sung the doors were open, and they were brought into the church.

Another ritual that took place on Easter Sunday, the *Visitatio Sepulchri*, the Visitation of the tomb, had the form of a theatrical play with dialogues spoken by cleric-actors reciting the script. The earliest version of the *Visitatio* from the tenth century (the manuscript from St. Gallen) was actually still the Easter lead – a dramatized dialogue between the Marys and the angel guarding the empty tomb (Gospel of St. Matthew 28:1–8, and of St. Mark 16: 1–8). Other scenes were subsequently added, such as the scene of the meeting of Christ with the two Marys (Matthew 28: 9–10); the scene of Sts. Peter and John hurrying to the tomb (John 20:1–10), and the scene of *Hortulanus*, in which Christ appears to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11–18). However, at this stage animated figures did not play any role in these rituals.

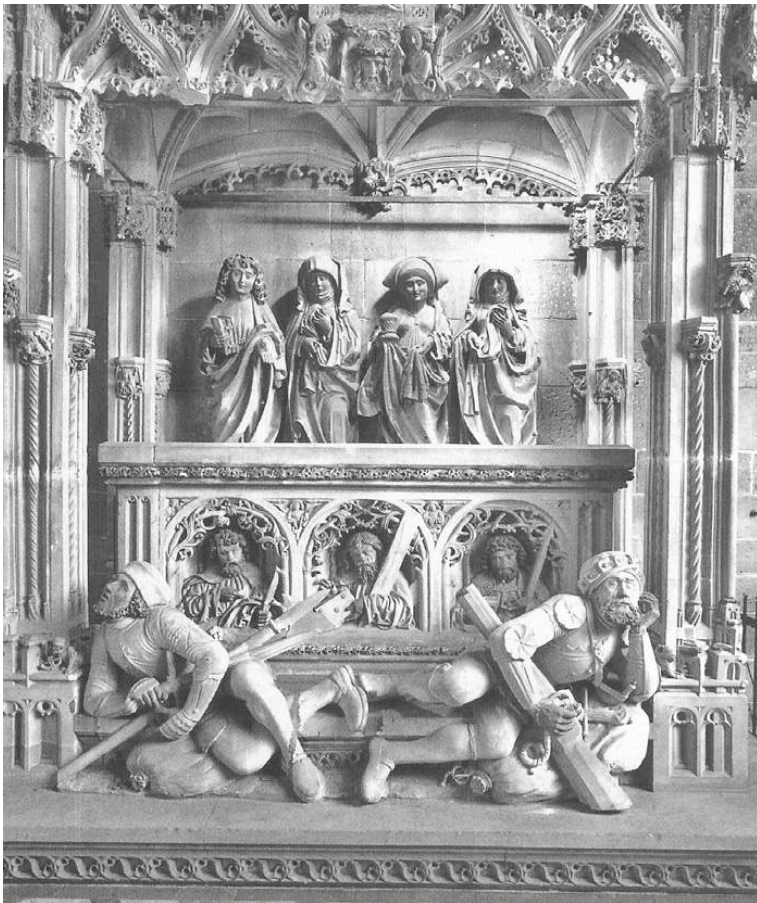


Fig. 429: Holy Sepulchre from the church in Reutlingen, c. 1500–1510

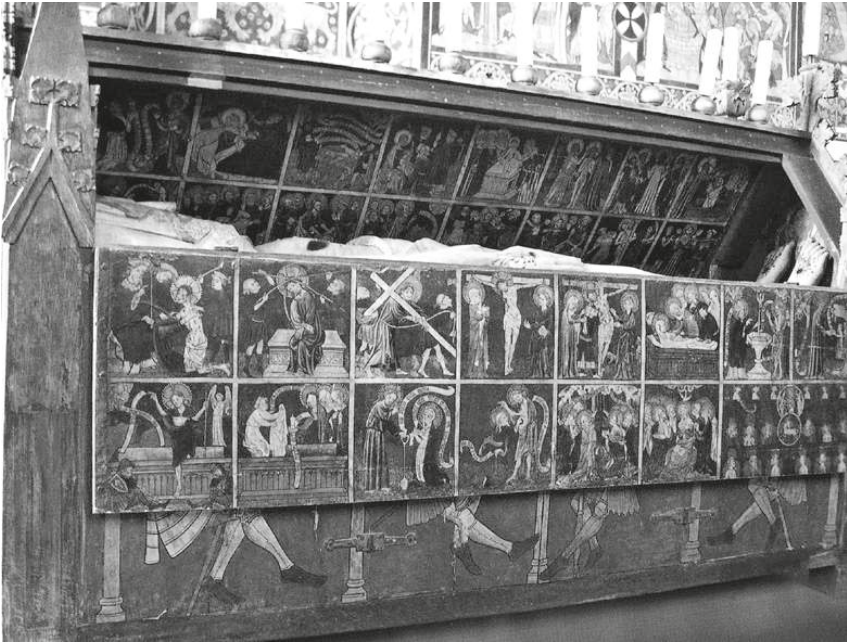


Fig. 430: Holy Sepulchre from the convent in Wienhausen, figure of Christ – c. 1290, chest – c. 1448



Fig. 431: Holy Sepulchre from the Sankt Benedikt Abbey in Hronský Svätý Beňadik (Garamszentbenedek), Esztergom, Keresztény Múzeum



Fig. 432: Holy Sepulchre from the church of Sankt Jakobi in Chemnitz, c. 1500, Chemnitz, Schlossmuseum

An important element of the ‘scenography’ in rituals of the *Depositio*, *Elevatio Crucis* and the *Visitatio Sepulchri* was the structure of the Holy Sepulchre.³²¹ Most commonly, it was a stable, permanent construction. Numerous *sepulchra* built in stone survive across Europe: frequently placed in a niche, or under a baldachin, showing the figures of the three Marys and the angels, at times also St. John the Evangelist and the sleeping guards. Typically, they include a statue of Christ lying in the sarcophagus, but some demonstrate the body of the Saviour carved in relief, so deeply embedded in the tombstone, that it was not visible during the Visitation of the Sepulchre,

321 **The Medieval Holy Sepulchre** – general studies: A. Schwarzweber, *Das heilige Grab in der deutschen Bildnerei des Mittelalters*, Freiburg i. Br. 1940; P. Sheingorn, “The ‘Sepulchrum Domini’: A Study in Art and Liturgy,” *Studies in Iconography* 4, 1978, pp. 37–60; P. Sheingorn, *The Eastern Sepulchre in England*, Kalamazoo, Mich., 1987; J.E.A. Kroesen, *The Sepulchrum Domini Through the Ages: Its Form and Funktion*, Leuven–Paris–Sterling 2000;

in accordance with the Biblical account about the Marys seeing the empty tomb. Or – the sarcophagus remains empty, so that inside (or on the tombstone) a wooden figure of Christ could be placed, after taking it off the cross in the ritual of the *Depositio Crucis* (for instance the Heiliges Grab in the church in Reutlingen, c. 1500–1510) [fig. 429]. In the Monastery of Cistercian Nuns in Wienhausen an old figure of Christ (c. 1290) was placed in a chest (from 1448), so that the cover could conceal the upper part of the sarcophagus on Holy Sunday, whilst the lower section revealed the inside on this coffin-like chest, in which the monstrance with the host was placed [fig. 430]. In this way, the tomb was displayed empty, abandoned by the Resurrected Christ. The Holy Sepulchre could be also formed from monumental groups of the Entombment, but these were thoroughly static, stationary constructions and were not directly engaged in the rituals of the placing of the body of Christ inside the tomb or extracting it from the sepulchre [figs. 352–354].³²² At times, a moveable, wooden structure was used as

J.E.A. Kroesen, “Heiliges Grab und Tabernakel. Ihr Zusammenhang im mittelalterlichen Kirchenraum,” *Das Münster* 4, 2000, pp. 290–300; M. Maisel, *Sepulchrum Domini. Studien zur Ikonographie und Funktion großplastischer Grablegungsgruppen am Mittelrhein und im Rheinland*, Mainz 2002; S. Abelléa, *Les Saint Sépulchres monumentaux du Rhin supérieur et de la Souabe (1340–1400)*, Strasbourg 2003; C. Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West from the Beginning to 1600*, Oxford–New York 2005; M. Kapustka, *Figura i hostia...*, pp. 110–113, 153–155, 255–268. Specialised studies, selected monographs of surviving examples: M. Prokopp, *Das heilige Grab von Garamszentbenedek im Christlichen Museum zu Esztergom*, Budapest 1982; F. Niehoff, “Das Kölner Ostergrab – Studien zum Heiligengrab im hohen Mittelalter,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 51, 1990, pp. 7–68; I. Heckmann-von Wehren, “Das Heilige Grab der St. Jakobikirche zu Chemnitz und seine typologische Einordnung im Kontext des deutschsprachigen Kulturraums,” *Denkmalpflege in Sachsen* 2003; E.-H. Lemper, *Görlitz. Heiliges Grab mit Kreuzkapelle*, Regensburg 2004; C. Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West. From the Beginning to 1600*, Oxford 2007; *Münsterblatt* (Freiburg i. Br.) 19, 2012 – an issue dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre in the Cathedral in Freiburg im Breisgau; R. Juhos, “A garamszentbenedeki Úrkoporsó. A használat rekonstrukciójának lehetőségei” [The Holy Sepulchre from Garamszentbenedek], *Ars Hungarica* 42, 2016, no. 4, pp. 339–352; her, “Mögliche Funktionen der mittelalterlichen Heiligen Gräber,” *Acta historiae artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 58, 2017, pp. 21–56.

322 **The sculptural groups of the Entombment as the Holy Sepulchre:** W.H. Forsyth, *The Entombment of Christ...*; M. Martin, *La statuaire de la Mise au Tombeau du Christ des XV^e et XVI^e siècles en Europe occidentale*, Paris 1997; E. Karsalleh, “‘Mises au tombeau du Christ’ réalisées pour les dignitaires

the Holy Sepulchre, placed on wheels, as in Hronsky Benadik (c. 1490, now Esztergom, Keresztény Múzeum) [fig. 431], or at least structures that could slide, as in Chemnitz (c. 1500, Schlossbergmuseum) [fig. 432] – always empty inside, designed to have inserted inside them an animated figure of Christ.



Fig. 433: Master of the Polyptych from Liegnitz (workshop of Nikolaus Obilman), *The Ascension Christ*, c. 1470–1480, Wrocław, National Museum

religieux: particularités et fonctions,” in: *L'artiste et le clerc. Commandes artistiques des grands ecclésiastiques à la fin du Moyen Âge (XIV^e–XVI^e siècle)*, ed. by F. Joubert, Paris 2006, pp. 289–302; D.L. Sadler, *Stone, flesh, spirit: the Entombment of Christ in late medieval Burgundy and Champagne*, Leiden – Boston 2015.



Fig. 434: *Himmelloch* – opening in the vault of the Holy Spirit Church in Heidelberg



Fig. 435: Master of Large Noses (Meister der Grossen Nasen), once attributed to Martin Gramp, *The Ascension Christ* from Sankt Nikolai church in Freiburg, 1503, Freiburg (Switzerland), Musée d'Art et d'Histoire

Another type of animated figure used during the Holy Week in the north of Europe, in German and Central European countries, were statues of Christ ascending into the heavens [fig. 433].³²³ Forty days after Easter, the celebration of the *Ascensio (Assumptio) Domini* took place. This was anticipated by a public penitential and devotional procession with relics and icons venerated in specific places. Subsequently, following the singing of the antiphon *Ascendo ad Patrem*, the figure of Christ was slowly lifted, using ropes, towards the vault, where through a circular boss opening, called the ‘hole in the sky’ or the ‘heavenly opening’ (*Himmelloch*), the statue was taken to the attic, disappearing from the eyes of the faithful [fig. 434]. Hosts and flowers were dropped from the opening in the vault, as well as a puppet of the devil (as a sign of Christ’s conquering of evil and sin, in reference to Isaiah 14:12 ff.), with sparks from a flaming torch (as a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit, or conversely as a symbol of the flames of hell, accompanying the devil). In such a way, the ritual was described in a *breuiarium* from the Collegiate Church in Moosburg dated c. 1360 (the lifting of the figure of Christ, and the dropping of the host, roses, lilies and other flowers, as well as the dropping of the devil in between the flames).³²⁴ Sebastian Franck in *Weltbuch* from 1534 described the ritual thus: ‘Soon after the Feast of the Ascension of Christ takes place, during which all are stuffed with poultry meat and satisfied [...] they look at the figure of the Resurrected, standing previously on the altar, who is pulled before their eyes towards the vault, whilst an image of a hideous devil is dropped down and beaten with long sticks [rods] by boys gathered below until they have killed him. Subsequently, hosts fall from the sky [the vault], which symbolise the heavenly bread’.³²⁵ The dropping of the hosts symbolised spiritual enrichment

323 **The figures of the Ascending Christ in the ritual *Ascensio Christi*:** H.-J. Krause, ‘Imago ascensionis’ und ‘Himmelloch’...; H.R. Weber, *Die Umsetzung der Himmelfahrt Christi in die zeichenhafte Liturgie*; J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik*...; M. Kapustka, *Figura i hostia*..., pp. 113–121, 155–158.

324 For the description of the ceremony in the *breuiarium* from Moosburg see – M. Kapustka, *Figura i hostia*..., pp. 156–158.

325 “Bald darauf folgt das Fest der Auffahrt Christi/daran yederman voll ist/und eyn gef[]ügel essen muß/weiß nit wrumb/da zeucht man das erstanden bild/so diese zeit auff dem Altar gestanden ist/vor allem volck zu dem gewelb hinein/ und würfft den teüfel eyn scheützlich bild anstatt herab/in den schlagen di umbstenden knaben mit langen gerten biß sy in umbringen. Darrauff wirft man oblat[en] von hymmel herab/zu bedeuten das hymel brot.” Qtd. after M. Kapustka, *Figura i hostia*...

through the act of Salvation, as opposed to that of earthly food, like typical poultry meat (known as ‘fliegendes Fleisch’ or ‘flying meat;’ in folk imagination, it was associated with the lifting of the ‘flying’ body of Christ during the Ascension). The *Liber ordinarius* of the church in Halle, a codex commissioned by the Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg in 1532, records that a procession with figures of Christ, the Virgin and Apostles entered the church and stopped in the middle of the nave, under the *Himmelloch*. The figure of Christ was placed on a pedestal covered with red velvet; the statue of the Virgin on a neighbouring table, and the Apostles around them in semicircle. The clerics kissed the feet of Christ and his wounds; every member of the clergy participating in the ritual approached the figure in turn (perhaps that is why these parts of the figure are frequently badly preserved or damaged). Following the singing of the hymns, the figure of the Saviour, now accompanied by the responsorial hymns and antiphons, was lifted on ropes. From the opening in the sky figures of angels came down on clouds to take Christ to His Heavenly Kingdom. His face was turned to the east, towards the altar. A samite carpet was placed on the pavement below the figure, as occasionally the figure fell down by accident (allegedly, in one of such incident in 1433 the statue killed the priest of the Augustinian convent in Bernried). Again, from the hole in the vault hosts and flowers were dropped, and a trumpet evoked the sound of thunder.³²⁶

The wooden figures featured in the ritual became widely used in the end of the fourteenth and in the fifteenth centuries, though most of the surviving examples date from the turn of the sixteenth century (for instance the figure of the Master of Large Noses – Meister der Grossen Nasen – from the church of Sankt Nikolai in Freiburg, dated 1503, attributed earlier to Martin Gramp) [fig. 435].³²⁷ They are of fairly small dimensions, smaller than life-size, so that their weight did not put too much strain on the ropes when lifted to the vaults, but large enough to give the sense of realism to the scene of the Ascension being represented (the figure from Freiburg measures 120.5cm in height). They are carved with the outmost precision in the round, as the faithful saw them from all sides. Among the early examples, are figures surrounded by a mandorla, which both symbolised the glory of the Ascension and facilitated the figure’s move through the opening in the

326 M. Hamann, “Die Liturgie am Neuen Stift in Halle unter Albrecht Kardinal von Brandenburg,” in: *Der Kardinal: Albrecht von Brandenburg. Renaissancefürst und Mäzen*, ed. A. Tacke, exh. cat., Halle 2006, vol. II (*Essays*), pp. 323–339; Cf. H.J. Krause, “‘Imago ascensionis’ und ‘Himmelloch’...

327 St. Grasser, K. Simon-Muscheid, A. Fretz, *Die Freiburger Skulptur des 16. Jahrhundert. Herstellung, Funktion und Auftraggeberschaft*, Petersberg 2011.

vault (seen, for instance, in the figure in Württembergisches Landesmuseum in Stuttgart, dated c. 1430); later statues, even those with the late Gothic sway of draperies, retained streamlined outlines for that purpose. The hooks on the back of Christ's head or on His shoulders, or a console in the form of swirling clouds (for instance, the figure of Christ ascending into Heaven from Villingen-Schwenningen, Franziskanermuseum, c. 1500), prove that a certain figure was designed to be included in the *Ascensio* ritual. The protruding foot (as in the figure from Freiburg) is also not an accidental compositional solution: it was provided so that the faithful could adore and kiss it before the figure was lifted towards the vault.

Such figures acted as a visual representation of the real presence of Christ in the liturgy beyond the mass, and their mobility was paramount. It suggested – perhaps in a naïve way – the active agency of Christ (though it was not him who ascended towards the vault through his own will; he was mechanically lifted by the technical assistants of the liturgical spectacle). The falling hosts visualised his entry into Heaven and his corporeal meeting with God the Father (though after the Resurrection Christ functioned apart from his bodily human nature).

The animated, mobile and moveable figures of Christ described above – figures of Christ that could be taken off the cross, statuettes of the Resurrected, and figures of the Ascended Saviour – filled and determined the character of a long liturgical or para-liturgical narrative through consecutive rituals: from the *Adoratio* and *Depositio Crucis*, through *Elevatio Crucis*, to *Ascensio Domini*. They reinvigorated the cultic devotion and enriched it visually. They provided a wide spectrum of sensations: from devoted veneration, through self-identification with the Passion of Christ, to joyful exaltation.

However, these are not all the animated figures that we know from the Middle Ages.

III.2.6.4. *Palmesel and the Palm Sunday procession*

The entire cycle of the Holy Week was initiated by Palm Sunday, which similarly included handling of sculptural elements, namely the figure of Christ on an ass (German *Palmesel*) [fig. 436].³²⁸ This is probably the most popular form of late medieval moveable figure, and is very well-preserved in various impressive examples.

328 **Christ on an ass (*Palmesel*):** J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik...*, pp. 89–107. Furthermore: M. Peinkofer, “Von niederbayerischen *Palmeseln*,” *Bayerisches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde* 1950, pp. 79–85; A. Layer, “Der *Palmesel* in Schwaben,” *Jahrbuch des Historischen Vereins Dillingen*



Fig. 436: Lower Franconian workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1470–1480, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1955 (55.24)

an der Donau 83, 1981, pp. 224–235; U. Haastrup, “Medieval Props in the Liturgical Drama,” *Hafnia* 11, 1987, pp. 133–170; E. Lipsmayer, “Devotion and Decorum: Intention and Quality in Medieval German Sculpture,” *Gesta* 34, 1995, no. 1, pp. 20–27; A. Wenger, *Der Palmesel. Geschichte, Kult und Kunst*, exh. cat., Museum für Natur und Stadtkultur, Schwäbisch-Gmünd 2000; Ch. von Burg, “‘Das bildet vnsers Herren ab dem esel geschlagen’. Der Palmesel in den Riten der Zerstörung,” in: *Macht und Ohnmacht der Bilder. Reformatorischer Bildersturm im Kontext der europäischen Geschichte*, eds. P. Blickle, A. Hohenstein, H.R. Schmidt, F.-J. Sladacek, München 2002, pp. 117–141. See also the detailed studies: E. Wiepen, *Palmsonntagsprozession und Palmesel. Eine kultur- und kunstgeschichtlich-volkskundliche Abhandlung zum Kölner Palmesel der Kunsthistorisches Ausstellung zu Düsseldorf 1902 (Sammlung Schnütgen)*, Bonn 1903; A. Woziński, “Rzeźba Chrystusa na osiołku z Muzeum Narodowego w Poznaniu,” *Studia Muzealne* 16, 1992, pp. 75–96; H.-J. Diller, “A ‘Palmesel’ from the Cracow Region,” in: *The Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Davidson, New York 2005, pp. 58–62; A. Heinz, “Palmprozession und Palmesel in Trier,” *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch* 46, 2006, pp. 159–166; W. Walanus, “Imago Ihesu in asino. O niezachowanym dziele sztuki gotyckiej we Lwowie,” in: *Fides Ars Scientia. Studia dedykowane pamięci Księdza Kanonika Augustyna Mednisa*, eds. A. Betlej, J. Skrabski, Tarnów 2008, pp. 381–392; Ph. Helas, “La Santa Coda. Zu Legende und Rezeption einer ungewöhnlichen Reliquie,” in: *Synergies in*

The procession on Palm Sunday commemorated the entrance of Christ to Jerusalem (Matthew 21:5–10) and has a very long tradition which goes back to fourth-century Jerusalem. In the West it is documented from the seventh century. Originally, the bishop himself rode the ass (this was the custom practised in Jerusalem), and afterwards the relics of the Holy Cross, and then finally a crucifix were paraded on its back. The wooden figure of Christ, brought on a living ass, was later also carved in wood, and placed on a platform with wheels. It was introduced in the tenth century, and is first described in the life of St. Ulrich, the Bishop of Augsburg (c. 924–973), written between 982 and 992, as *effigies sedentis Domini super asinum*. It became more popular only in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: the earliest surviving examples date from the end of the twelfth century (four examples); eight date from the fourteenth century (from 27 included in various sources), most figures come from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (over 100 examples).

The procession walked from the ‘smaller’ church (*ecclesia minor*) to the ‘larger’ church (*ecclesia maior*). The former symbolised the Mount of Olives, and the latter the Temple of Jerusalem. On the road the faithful stopped at the station of the True Cross, where a large crucifix was displayed. It was adored and symbolically hit with palm branches, or their imitations. The palms were also dropped on the road, before the platform with Christ on the ass, and clerics acting as *pueri Hebreorum* – Jewish boys – aimed with branches for the figure of Christ. But he continued his entry, blessing the faithful with his raised hand. From the eleventh century a monstrance with the host was also carried in the procession.

As distinct from other animated figures used in rituals and performances of Holy Week, the figures of Christ on an ass did not have an additional function beyond their role in the re-enactment of the entry. They were not used as devotional objects inside the church, and after the procession they were packed away into storage.



Fig. 437: Lower Franconian workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1470–1480, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1955 (55.24)



Fig. 438: Lower Bavarian workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, end of the 12th c., Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung, Bode-Museum; the figure of the ass is a contemporary version



Fig. 439: Franconian workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1378, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 440: Swabian workshop, *Christ on an Ass* from Veringendorf, end of the 14th c., Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum



Fig. 441: Hans Multscher, *Christ on an Ass* from Sankt Ulrich und Afra church in Augsburg, 1456, Ulm, Ulmer Museum, on long-term loan from the Dominican convent in Wettenuhausen



Fig. 442: Workshop of Hans Multscher, *Christ on an Ass* from the Minster of Ulm, 1464, Ulm, Ulmer Museum



Fig. 443: Workshop from Ulm?, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1480, London, The Victoria & Albert Museum



Fig. 444: Swabian Workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, end of the 15th c., Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge, Hôtel Cluny



Fig. 445: Bavarian Workshop, *Christ on an Ass* from Ottenstall im Allgäu, end of the 15th c., Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 446: Franconian Workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1520–1530, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung, Bode-Museum



Fig. 447: Workshop from Cologne, *Christ on an Ass* from the church of Sankt Columba in Cologne, c. 1520, Cologne, Kolumba – Kunstmuseum des Erzbistums Köln



Fig. 448: Workshop from Lesser Poland, *Christ on an Ass* from Szydłowiec, early 16th c., Cracow, National Museum

Many *Palmesel* came down to us from Germany (over sixty), mostly from Swabia, Franconia, Bavaria, Austria, Tirol, Alsace, Switzerland, Silesia, and from Bohemia, Poland and the Netherlands [fig. 437–448]. Notable examples include figures in: the Schweizerisches Landesmuseum in Zurich (a Swiss master, the end of the twelfth century); the Bode-Museum in Berlin (from Lower Bavaria, end of the twelfth century, and later, Franconian c. 1520–1530); the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (Franconian c. 1378); the Württembergisches Landesmuseum in Stuttgart (Swabian, end of the fourteenth century); the Ulmer Museum in Ulm (one there is by Hans Multscher, 1456, and another from his workshop, 1464); the Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame in Strasburg (Swabian c. 1460); the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, New York from Lower Franconia, c. 1470–1480); the Victoria & Albert Museum in London (Swabian, probably executed in Ulm c. 1480); the Musée National du Moyen Âge, Hôtel Cluny, in Paris (Swabian, end of the fifteenth century);

the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich (Bavarian, end of the fifteenth century); the Historisches Museum in Basel (Swabian c. 1500); the Kolumba Museum in Cologne (Cologne c. 1520); the National Museum in Cracow (Lesser Poland, circle of Veit Stoss, early sixteenth century) and in Poznań (Swabian, circle of the Erhart workshop, end of the fifteenth century). In various cities, there were more than one figure of this type, used in competing processions that took place simultaneously in different parts of the town.³²⁹ In Zurich there were three processions with asses, organised by different churches: the Parish church of Saints Felix and Regula, of Our Lady and at St. Peter's. In Nuremberg, there were also at least three processions with *Palmesel*, from the church of Our Lady (from the fourteenth century, preserved) and two main parish churches: St. Sebaldus and St. Lawrence (lost). In Wrocław, there are documented examples of such processions in various churches, but none of the figures have survived.

They are all similar. The figure of Christ is of a seated man, and is life-size: on average 120–140cm. In general, the figure of Christ and the ass are carved from two pieces of wood and can be separated. Christ sits on the ass, most typically without a saddle, dressed in either a red or deep blue cloak, sometimes wearing a crown; in one hand he holds the reins and with the second he blesses the crowds. He is presented as the ruler during *adventus*, the triumphal entry to the city. Christ is a king – *Rex Regum*, demanding adoration.

II.2.6.5. *Other mobile figures*

Other figures also participated in rituals and processions. In the parish church of St. Lawrence in Nuremberg, a figure of a virgin saint was used in various ceremonies. One had to add different attributes and clothes to the statue to transform it into a specific character. Thus, on 19th November it received a crown, a veil and a loaf of bread, and became St. Elisabeth of Hungary. On 21st January the figure was transformed into St. Agnes with a crown and a figure of a lamb. In turn, on 21st October it could become St. Ursula, with an arrow in her hand (and so on). This must have been a common practice, as many anonymous statuettes of holy virgins survive without attributes or characteristic features. The procedure shows that the late medieval statues were adaptable, constantly being transformed, and mobile in their function.³³⁰

329 See W. Marcinkowski, *Chrystus na osiołku z Szydłowca*, website of the National Museum in Cracow: http://www.muzeum.krakow.pl/uploads/media/20._Chrystus_na_osiolku_z_Szydlowca.pdf (2014).

330 A. Gümbel, *Das Mesnerpflichtbuch von St. Lorenz in Nürnberg vom Jahre 1493*, Munich 1928.

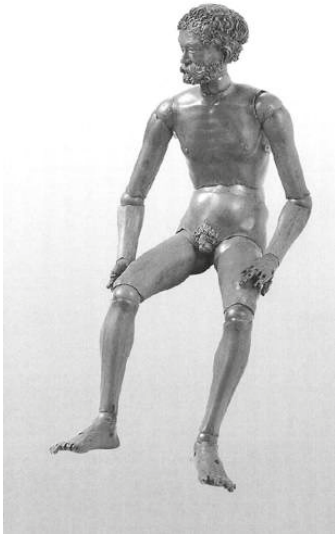


Fig. 449: Monogrammist I.P., *Gliedermann*, c. 1520, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe



Fig. 450: Monogrammist I.P., *Gliederweib*, c. 1520, Leipzig, Museum der bildenen Künste

The need to manipulate the human figure, dissembled into moveable elements, survived in a new practice in early sixteenth century in a lay ceremony that was entirely beyond liturgical and religious performances. The so-called *Gliedermann* from the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg and the corresponding *Gliederweib* from the Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Leipzig [figs. 449–450] – figures of a naked man and woman, with moveable limbs, attached through circular hinges – were created c. 1520 in Passau. They are made from precious wood: the man from boxwood and the woman likely from pear, which characterises the figures as precious and sophisticated objects, similar to the aforementioned prayer nuts. They were carved by the monogrammist I.P., a sculptor from the border of Bavaria and Austria, who was active in Passau and probably also in Salzburg and Prague.³³¹ They measure 22.5cm each. They could act

331 E.F. Bange, *Die Kleinplastik der deutschen Renaissance in Holz und Stein*, Munich 1928, pp. 59–60; *Die Kunst der Donauschule, 1490–1540*, ed. O. Wutzel, exh. cat. Linz, Schlossmuseum 1965, pp. 278, 281; G. von der Osten, H. Vey, *Painting and Sculpture in Germany and the Netherlands*,

as studies for ideal proportions, based on the canon codified by Albrecht Dürer. They testify to a new culture – the Renaissance culture of connoisseurs and collectors, fascinated by the naked body, and antique ideals of human figures and their proportions. They were collectible items, placed in a study room, a *studiolo* or in the Kunst- or Wunderkammer of a humanist collector, active in the realm of southern German courts: of the Emperor's in Vienna, the Archbishop's in Salzburg or the Duke's in Munich.

The late medieval and early modern worlds were filled with moveable artistic objects: portable, moved, touched; at times veiled or unveiled, dressed and undressed – manipulated in numerous ways. In those times such figures were numerous, but the Reformation and the following iconoclasm destroyed many of them – especially those that represented Christ or 'active' holy figures. Considered to be substitutes, the personifications and incarnations of the sacred, they stimulated the condemnable cult of 'idols,' according to the Protestants, who denounced them as 'fetishes,' and 'false gods,' which distracted the faithful from the need to worship God, and transformed the faith into a superstition.³³²

Animatable figures of the Virgin, and the moveable figure of the Crucified Christ, that could be taken off the cross and placed in the Holy Sepulchre; portable, recumbent figures of Christ in the tomb; statuettes of the resurrected Saviour ascending into heaven; *Palmesel*; mobile Holy Sepulchres, and statuettes of the naked Christ Child: all these made the visual culture of the time actively mobile, both moveable and frequently in movement. They did so much in the same way that tapestries, diptychs, triptychs and polyptychs, or as prayer nuts, codices and small books that could be flipped through, playing cards and sets of prints that were assembled, and small paintings and single-leaf prints that were held in the hands, did.

In this context, one should therefore also discuss the fascination with automatic mechanisms, characteristic both of high, courtly and also popular urban cultures, that is apparent at that time.

1500–1600, Harmondsworth 1969, pp. 251–252; *Albrecht Dürer: His Art in Context*, cat. nos. 5.24–5.25; Ch. Jürgens, "Die Leipziger Gliederpuppe des Meister IP – naturwissenschaftliche Untersuchungen," in: *Das Expressive in der Kunst...*, pp. 183–193; E. Weymann, "Die Gliederpuppen des Meisters IP – ein skulpturales Erbe der Proportionslehre Albrecht Dürers," in: *Das Expressive in der Kunst...*, pp. 169–181.

332 K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ...*, chapter VI.1; M. Kapustka, *Figura i hostia...*, pp. 269 ff.

III.2.7. Mechanisms, automata, clocks and apparatus

Automata and various mechanically operated contraptions constituted important elements of the grand spectacles that characterised French and Burgundian courtly culture.³³³ Mechanisms for entertainment – *engiens d'esbattement* – filled the *galeries des engins* [engines] in the Castle of Hesdin, located between Arras and Boulogne-sur-Mer. The castle was built in the twelfth century and extended in the fourteenth century to serve the Counts of Artois, and mostly Robert II. Subsequently, it belonged to Louis de Mâle (van Maele), and from 1384 it became the summer and hunting residence of the dukes of Burgundy. During the reign of Philip the Good, in the 1430s, it underwent an extensive renovation and further extension. In 1553, during the Franco-Ottoman war against the Habsburgs, the troops of Charles V looted the castle. Inventory books from 1432, which list the payments made to the courtly painter Colard le Voleur, describe the castle's extensive collection of automata and mechanical devices.³³⁴ A gallery with arrases included a mechanically operated fountain and three paintings with figures that splashed water at viewers, and a mirror that scattered soot and flour. Another machine showered oblivious guests with water. When exiting the eccentric room, visitors would be punched in a head and shoulders by another automaton. Another chamber contained a machine that produced

333 For **medieval and early modern automata and the mechanical objects of art** see: J. Douglas Bruce, "Human Automata in Classical Tradition and Mediaeval Romance," *Modern Philology* 10, 1913, no. 4, pp. 511–526; H. Heckmann, *Die andere Schöpfung. Geschichte der frühen Automaten in Wirklichkeit und Dichtung*, Frankfurt a.M. 1982; R. Hammerstein, *Macht und Klang. Tönende Automaten als Realität und Fiktion in der alten und mittelalterlichen Welt*, Bern 1986; B. Franke, "Gesellschaftsspiele mit Automaten: 'Merveilles' in Hesdin," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 24, 1997, pp. 135–158; J.J. Berns, *Sakralautomaten...*; B. Franke, "Automaten in höfischen Lustgärten der Frühen Neuzeit," in *Automaten in Kunst und Literatur des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by K. Grabmüller, Wiesbaden 2003, pp. 247–267; J. Tripps, *The joy of automata and Cistercian monasteries...*; J. Sawday, *Engines of the Imagination: Renaissance culture and the rise of the machine*, London 2007; *Allah's Automata. Artifacts of the Arab-Islamic Renaissance (800–1200)*, ed. by S. Zielinski, Ostfildern 2015; J. Keating, *Animating Empire: Automata, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Early Modern World*, University Park, Pennsylvania, 2018; W. Koeppel, "Clocks and Automata: The Art of Technological Development," in: *Making marvels: Science and splendor at the courts of Europe*, ed. by W. Koeppel, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2019, Yale University Press, New Haven – London 2019, pp. 194–203.

334 B. Franke, *Gesellschaftsspiele mit Automaten...*

rain, thunderstorms and snow. There was also a wooden statue of a monk, who greeted those entering the room. If someone wished to escape the rain and snow, he or she could accidentally step on a section of the pavement that activated a mechanism which opened a pit filled with feathers, into which the visitor would then fall. Whilst crossing the bridge one could also fall into the water beneath, because of the concealed trapdoor. In many places, pressing a button, or touching a lever or an element of the interior caused water to spurt out, for instance when a window was opened. An open book with musical notation stood on a lecturn; if touched it caused an explosion of wet soot. There was also an independent automaton – a messenger who delivered orders from the owner of the castle. The guest had to walk between rows of mechanical foot soldiers and jesters, who flogged them mercilessly. Anyone who disobeyed the order was drenched. A mechanical owl, sitting on a windowsill, spoke to the guests.

This entire system of mechanical games constituted not only a whimsical entertainment. It allowed the duke to be seen as the *Imitator Creatoris*, the imitator of the Demiurge, the ruler of all creation, the lord of his subjects and of the environment – governing both people and nature. The mechanisms acted as markers of his power: the visitor-subject was physically manipulated and directly controlled by various contraptions, created at ducal order. The duke was empowered to govern their bodies. At the same time, he was the inventor, the great engineer, like the ancient Heron of Alexandria. His work was an expression of the power and might of his reign, and it revealed the strength and agency of the ruler. Finally, his creation of this spectacle celebrated the splendour of the ducal court.

Indeed, engineering contributed to the courtly rituals of the late Middle Ages.³³⁵ The famous *voeu du faisan* – “the Oath of the Pheasant” – was an incredibly grand ceremony of the Burgundian court, organised in Lille on 17th February 1454.³³⁶ Philip the Good ordered the feast as an interlude of the

335 H. Flachenecker, “Automaten und lebende Bilder in der höfischen Kultur des Spätmittelalters,” in: *Automaten in Kunst und Literatur des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by K. Grabmüller, Wiesbaden 2003, pp. 173–195.

336 **The Feast of the Pheasant:** O. Cartelli, “Das Fasanenfest am Hofe der Herzöge von Burgund (1454),” *Historisch-Politische Blätter* 167, 1921, pp. 65–80 and 141–158; A. Lafortune-Martel, *Fête noble en Bourgogne au XV^e siècle. Le banquet du Faisan (1454). Aspects politiques, sociaux et culturels*, Montréal–Paris 1984; M.-Th. Caron, “17 février 1454: le Banquet du Faisan: fête de cour et stratégies de pouvoir,” *Revue du Nord* 78, 1996, pp. 269–288; M.-Th. Caron, *Le Banquet du Voeu du Faisan. Fête de cour et prise de conscience européenne*, Arras 1995; P. Cockshaw, “Les Voeux du Faisan. Examen des différentes versions du texte,” in: *L'ordre de la Toison d'or...*, pp. 115–117;

planned crusade against the Ottoman Empire, to legitimize his monarchical aspirations and to refer to the tradition of king-crusaders: Louis VII, Richard the Lionheart, Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Saint Louis. Mathieu de Coussy, Olivier de La Marche and Alexandre de Saint-Léger described the feast and their accounts refer to various automata and mechanisms, which testified to the duke's power and overwhelmed the guests. At the high table there were special constructions such as the castle of Melusine with towers that sprinkled orange water, a windmill, and a barrel that contained two types of liquids crowned by a figure with an inscription: "Whoever is thirsty, may take a drink;" a desert with a tiger fighting a serpent; a wild man on a camel, a cavalier and a dame under a vine looking in an amused way at a man who scares some birds from the shrubs; a jester on a bear; a lake with a sailing boat traversing its surface and buildings around it. On a small table the guests admired a forest with moveable wild animals, a lion tied to a tree with a man baiting a dog at him, and a travelling merchant with a basket filled with goods. On another table there was a church with a bell tower, surrounded by four musicians, bell-ringers, and a naked boy on a rock who spilled streaks of rosewater; further on there was a boat with all its ropes and sails, with sailors climbing up its masts, and a fountain and a meadow with the figure of St. Andrew (patron saint of Burgundy). The artefacts were mostly mechanical devices. In the middle of the chamber, there was a statue of a woman, with mulled wine flowing from her right breast. An actual lion was chained to the statue and its role was highlighted by the accompanying sign, which read: "Don't you dare touch my lady." The second most renowned feast of the Burgundian court was the wedding of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York in Bruges on 3rd July 1468.³³⁷ During the ceremony mechanical devices

1454: *Le Banquet du Faisan*, (Actes du colloque, Université d'Arras 1995), ed. by M.-Th. Caron, D. Clauzel, Arras 1997; H. Müller, "Fasanenfest und Orden vom Goldenen Vlies. Neuerscheinungen zur burgundischen Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 27, 2000, no. 2, pp. 203–227; M.-Th. Caron, *Les Voeux du Faisan, noblesse en fête, esprit de croisade: le manuscrit français 11594 de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, Tournai 2003; H. Flachenecker, *Automaten und lebende Bilder...*, pp. 182–191; W. Prevenier, "Les aspects idéologiques et les fonctions sociales des arts et des fêtes à l'époque bourguignonne," *Annales de Bourgogne* 80, 2008 (2009), no. 1/2, pp. 3–20; R. Strøm-Olsen, "Political Narrative and Symbolism in the Feast of the Pheasant (1454)," *Viator* 46, 2015, no. 3, pp. 317–342; O. Rojewski, *Arte, ceremonial y esplendor festivo...*, pp. 268–294.

337 **The Marriage of Charles the Bold with Margaret of York:** W. Paravicini, "Die zwölf 'Magnificences' Karls des Kühnen," in: *Formen und Funktionen*

played a key part in the scenography. During the interludes to the chamber were introduced a unicorn, leopard, lion, dromedary, griffin, and a whale who moved his flippers and tail; from his back descended singing sirens. A golden lion, with a singing dwarf on his back, roared and walked down the room. The feast was interrupted by the arrival of a unicorn, with leopard on his back, who in one paw held a banner with the coat-of-arms of England, and in the other a bunch of marguerites – a reference to the name of the bride. The sounds of music came from the mouths of lions, goats, wolfs and asses.

Undoubtedly, this mode of animating the courtly spectacles brought to mind certain ancient precedents. Homer in the *Iliad* introduces automata devised by Hephaestus: mechanical, speaking servants, who helped the limping god to walk (“[...] Him she found sweating with toil as he moved to and fro about his bellows in eager haste; for he was fashioning tripods, twenty in all, to stand around the wall of his well-built hall, [375] and golden wheels had he set beneath the base of each that of themselves they might enter the gathering of the gods at his wish and again return to his house, a wonder to behold.” *Book XVIII*) (and three-legged tables on wheels, which independently moved towards the guests during the feast. Archimedes of Syracuse, Ctesibius and Heron, both of Alexandria, or Philo of Byzantium designed various mechanical toys and devices. Heron created theatres with automated figures that took parts in plays such as *Nauplios* – the story of events after the Trojan War– with figures of nymphs fixing Ajax’s ship, dolphins jumping from the water, and ships floating on water that were sunk with a lightning strike. This tradition continued in the early Middle Ages. A monumental, hydraulic clock with the figure of Hercules was created and placed around 500 CE in Palestine-Syrian Gaza. In 835, the Byzantine basileus Theophilus received envoys, seated on a throne decorated by bronze figures of lions, which roared when he pulled a lever, with mechanical birds singing from branches of artificial trees placed on the sides of the throne. The ancient, Byzantine tradition was continued by great medieval physicist-engineers: Roger Bacon (1214–1294), who devised a mechanical, talking head, and Albertus Magnus (c. 1200–1280), who was said to have constructed an iron doorkeeper who opened and closed the doors and greeted guests with its mechanical voice.

öffentlicher Kommunikation im Mittelalter, ed. by G. Althoff, Stuttgart 2001, pp. 319–395, especially part III, pp. 331–339; J. Goossenaerts, “Charles the Bold’s ten days of marriage celebration: Material culture as a means of political communication between duke and city council,” in: *Staging the Court of Burgundy: Proceedings of the conference “The splendour of Burgundy (1418–1482): a multidisciplinary approach,”* Bruges, Groeningemuseum 2009, London 2013, pp. 97–104.

The twelfth- and thirteenth-century medieval chivalric romances described numerous automata of human and animal forms,³³⁸ and the architectural model book of Villard de Honnecourt from the 1230s includes schematic designs of animal automata.

It is plausible that the fascination with automata and mechanisms at the Burgundian court was to an extent linked to the initiative and ideology of the new crusade, undertaken by various dukes, especially Philip the Good. The spectacular splendour of the court, fulfilled through games in the chamber of the automata in Hesdin, and manifested during the feast of *voeux du faisan* (which was an inaugural ceremony of the crusade), was perhaps intended to rival the myth of the luxury and grandness of the eastern courts of Muslim rulers: caliphs and sultans. Surely the stories about their dazzling technical inventions circulated widely, such as the tenth-century description of the Palace of Caliph in Baghdad, with a great pool guarded by moveable figures of horse riders, and a silver tree growing in the middle with mechanical, whistling birds of silver and gold. The palace included another pool, filled with mercury on which golden boats floated; the adjacent garden housed other devices such as singing birds, roaring lions and other animated animals.

The courtly fashion for the automata motivated artists and scientists to construct independent figurative mechanisms. We know, for instance, that in c. 1495 Leonardo da Vinci designed a mechanical knight, who could sit and had moveable arms, head and jaw,³³⁹ whilst Johannes Müller, known as Regiomontanus (1436–1476), a celebrated German scholar (he was a mathematician, astronomer and mechanic, amongst other professions) built a flying eagle of iron, and an artificial flying fly, which he showed to Emperor Maximilian I, his patron.

Many mechanisms and measuring tools that functioned in the wealthy late medieval cities were automata or machines which moved sculpted figures. The clock, once in the choir of the church of the Abbey in Heilsbronn (Thomas Teichmann, 1513, now in Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum) [fig. 451], includes a large, nearly life-sized (145cm) figure of Death, sitting

338 J. Douglas Bruce, “Human Automata in Classical Tradition and Mediaeval Romance,” *Modern Philology* 10, 1913, no. 4, pp. 511–526.

339 For this and other Leonardo’s robotical inventions see: M.E. Rosheim, *Leonardo’s Lost Robots*, Berlin – Heidelberg – New York 2006; L. Garai, “Appendix: The functioning of the mechanical lion,” in: *Leonardo da Vinci & France*, ed. by C. Pedretti, exh. cat., Château du Clos Lucé, Parc Leonardo da Vinci, Amboise, 2009–2011, Poggio a Caiano 2010, p. 139; *Leonardo da Vinci – the mechanical bat*, ed. by M. Taddei, Milan [2019]. Cf. P. Galluzzi, *The Italian Renaissance of machines*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. – London 2020.

on a lion and striking the hours with a bone held in his hand. The figure had a moveable right arm, jaw and tongue. Increasingly popular were the monumental clocks with “theatres” of mobile figurines, placed in parish churches or embedded in the facades of communal buildings.



Fig. 451: Thomas Teichmann, *Death Riding a Lion*, from the clock of the choir of the Abbey church in Heilsbronn (Franconia), 1513, 145cm, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum

The astronomical clock in the Marian Church in Gdańsk [fig. 452] made by Hans Dürenger between 1464 and 1470 (the commission document survives and is dated 1st May 1464), measures 14.3m in height and is divided into three stories.³⁴⁰ In the lower section there is a calendar with moveable dials attached to gears, which showed the days, months, years, and signs of

340 A. Woziński, “Wokół zagadnień formy, programu ikonograficznego i treści zegara astronomicznego w kościele Panny Marii w Gdańsku,” *Porta aurea* 9, 2010, pp. 5–44; his, *W świetle gwiazd. Sztuka i astrolgia w Gdańsku w latach 1450–1550*, Gdańsk 2011, pp. 43–76 (with previous bibliography in note 6).

the zodiac; the lunar cycle (dates of the new moon); the solar cycle; dates of Sundays; the calendar of saints (a list of saints, which allowed dates to be correlated with the days of their feasts), and the timespan between festive and liturgical periods (starting from the Nativity till the last Sunday before the Ash Wednesday). In the middle section, there was a planetary clock, which showed hours, the signs of the zodiac and lunar phases. The top part included animated figures: the twelve apostles, standing on two moving platforms, appeared from behind the closed doors, followed by Death. The four Evangelists appeared on the tier above them, with Adam and Eve standing at the very top, activating the bells— the small one every fifteen minutes, and the larger every hour: Adam strikes the hourly bell with a hammer, and Eve pulls the string of the quarter bell.



Fig. 452: Hans Dürenger, *Astronomical Clock* in Our Lady Church in Danzig/ Gdańsk, 1464–1470

Contrary to the appearances, the famous astronomical clock on the southern wall of the Old Town Hall in Prague does not belong to the category of clocks with automated figurative theatre. Constructed in various stages from 1410 to 1551, today it constitutes a popular tourist attraction. In the upper story, it contains a platform with moveable figures of the Apostles and the personifications of Death, Paganism (a figure of a Turk), Vanitas and Avarice. However, these were only installed in the seventeenth century, and did not form a part of the clock before 1552.³⁴¹

However, apart from the one in Gdańsk, we still have several examples of late medieval clocks with moveable figures.³⁴² From the clock of the Cathedral in Strasburg (c. 1350) only a mechanical cock has survived, which flapped its wings at noon, fluffed its feathers and clucked. From 1405 to 1450 the astronomical clock in Bern was constructed, which includes *Figurenspiel* – moving figures, which are, admittedly, later, but which perhaps reflect an earlier, late medieval construction. In 1356, to commemorate the *Golden Bull*, Charles IV of Luxemburg commissioned a clock and *Männleinlaufen* for the facade of the Church of Our Lady in Nuremberg. Its animated figures, with monarchs (the electors) hold the insignia of the Empire, and circulate in homage to the enthroned emperor (the patron of the building); the construction was built only in 1506–1509 [fig. 453]. I have mentioned the figure of Death on a lion in the clock from Heilsbronn, preserved in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich [fig. 451]. In the cathedral in Lund, Sweden, there is a fourteenth-century *horologium mirabile Lundense* attributed to Nikolaus Lilienfeld (the author of the celebrated clock in the church of Sankt Nikolai in Stralsund) [fig. 454]. The clock includes six figurines of the Magi from the East and their servants, who at noon and at three o'clock in the afternoon traverse the platform before the figures of Mary and Christ, reenacting the scene of the Adoration of the Magi, with trumpeters lifting their trumpets

341 Z. Horský, E. Procházka, *Pražský orloj*, (*Acta historiae rerum naturalium nec non technicarum IX*), Prague 1964; Z. Horský, *Pražský orloj*, Prague 1988; J. Malina, *Staroměstský orloj*, Prague 2005; J. Malina, *Prague Horloge: A Guide to the History and Esoteric Concept of the Astronomical Clock in Prague*, Prague 2005; P. Skála, “Alegorie ctností a neřestí na pražském orloji,” *Staletá Praha* 31, 2015, no. 1, pp. 110–112.

342 M. Schukowski, *Wunderuhren. Astronomische Uhren in Kirchen der Hansezeit*, Schwerin 2006. See also R. Hammerstein, *Macht und Klang. Tönende Automaten als Realität und Fiktion in der alten und mittelalterlichen Welt*, Bern 1986.

when the recorded hymn *In dulci jubilo* is mechanically played.³⁴³ Similar, mechanical clocks were common, and especially so in the Baltic region. Apart from Gdańsk and Lund, there are constructions from Rostock (1379, rebuilt in 1472 and 1641–1643, and originally with animated figures) [fig. 455]; Bad Doberan (1390, originally with moveable figures of the Apostles); Stralsund (1394); Stendal (early XV); Lübeck (1405–1407, 1561–1566, destroyed in 1942, originally with animated figurines), and Wismar (c. 1435?, destroyed).³⁴⁴



Fig. 453: Jörg Heuss and Sebastian Lindenast the Elder, clock and *Männleinlaufen* from the facade of the Our Lady Church in Nuremberg, commissioned in 1356, and executed in 1506–1509

343 Th. Wählin, *The Mediæval Astronomical Clock in Lund Cathedral, with a survey of some similar clocks on the continent and in England*, Lund 1930.

344 M. Schukowski, *Wunderuhren...*, passim.

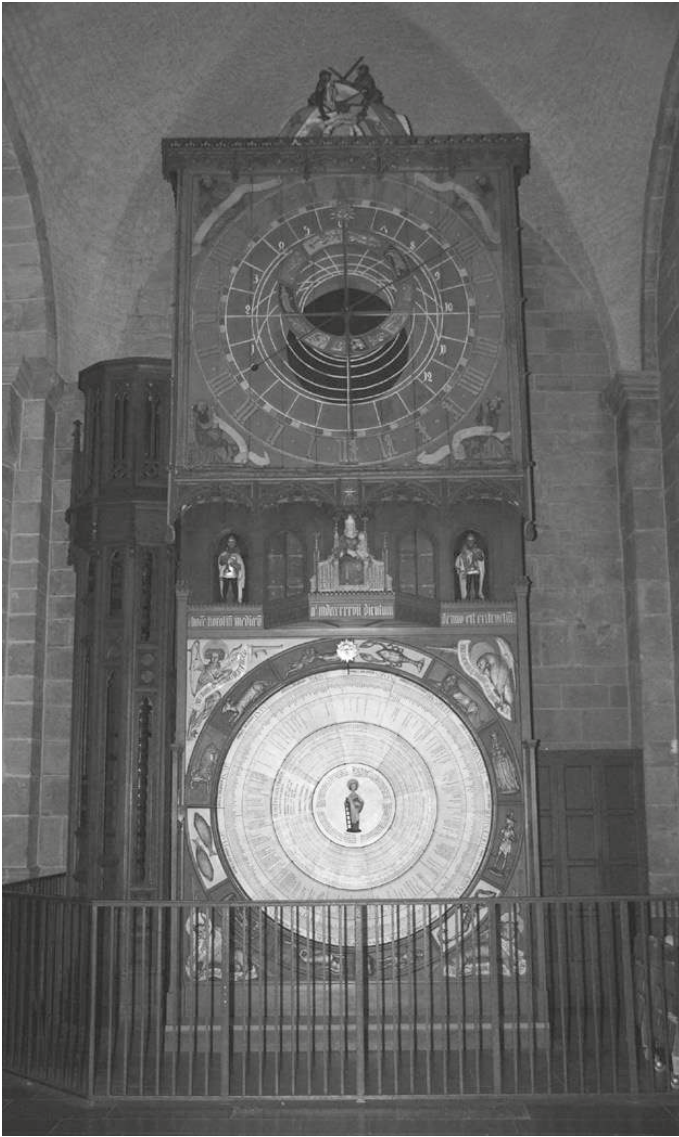


Fig. 454: Nikolaus Lilienfeld?, *Astronomical Clock* in Lund Cathedral, end of the 14th c. with later additions and modifications



Fig. 455: *Astronomical Clock* in the Marienkirche in Rostock, 1379, rebuilt in 1472 and 1641–1643)

Handling and activating, setting in motion, moving and installing, were the key functions of various scientific devices. At times they were very intricate, and made by skillful artists. This is evident in the collection of late medieval and early modern geographical and astronomical tools in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. They include a globe of the Earth from 1492–1494, the first surviving cartographic depiction of the globe in a shape of a sphere, designed by Martin Behaim in Nuremberg during his sojourn in his hometown (he was active at the court of the Portuguese King John III) and then donated to the city council [fig. 456]. The sphere, which measures 50cm in diameter, is made of *papier-mâché* and covered by a simple paper, and was painted by Georg Glockendon the Elder.³⁴⁵ To the aforementioned Johannes Regiomontanus probably belonged the portable, folded sundial with a compass (c. 1464–1468 or before 1471), made of brass, which was a preparatory model for the golden object given to Pope Paul II, whose portrait is visible on the dial [fig. 457].³⁴⁶

345 J.K.W. Willers et al., *Focus Behaim-Globus*, ed. by W. Pülhorn, P. Laub, exh. cat. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 1992. See also: *Martin Behaim und die Nürnberger Kosmographen 1459–1507*, exh. cat. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 1957.

346 Mentioned in: G. Wolfschmidt, “Nürnberg – Zentrum des Instrumentenbaus,” in: *Astronomie in Nürnberg*, ed. G. Wolfschmidt, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 2010, p. 59. For a short description, see *Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Führer durch die Sammlungen*, ed. G.U. Großmann et al., Nuremberg 2001, p. 93.



Fig. 456: Martin Behaim and Georg Glockendon the Elder, *Globe of the Earth*, 1492–1494, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum



Fig. 457: Attributed to Johannes Regiomontanus, *Sundial of Pope Paul II*, c. 1464–1468 or before 1471, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, on loan from the Museen der Stadt Nürnberg

Such accurate and skillfully made mechanisms and devices contributed to the visual culture of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. They were not used solely for measuring and other empirical scientific operations, but, as is clear from the two examples discussed above, they were collectible items. Offered as official gifts to the highest elites, such as the city council of the imperial city of Nuremberg, and to the pope himself, they were intended to be looked at and admired. They were admired as curiosities, or *Raritäten*: unusual discoveries, or conceptual and artistic inventions; firstly as the transposition of the flat map onto the convexity of the globe, and secondly as the manifestation of the new discovery by Georg von Peurbach from the mid-fifteenth century of the distinction between the magnetic and geographic north pole of the Earth (hence the connection between the mechanisms of the sundial and compass). They were scientific toys, designed to be handled by an owner with scientific aspirations – a dilettante and a connoisseur.

The visual culture of the Late Middle Ages was formed by a world of artistic things that were not only filled with movement. The reception of many objects was governed by touch and having physical contact with the work. The handler's perception was activated not only through looking, but also through touch, handling, grabbing, holding the object in their hands, in their fingers, or sometimes even fondling, caressing or kissing it. The touching and kissing of relics was a common ritual and the physical contact sanctified the faithful. The removing of Christ's body from the cross, carrying Him in processions, and placing His body in a tomb were all highly tactile experiences. Moreover, it was not coincidental that the body and skin were soft to touch, or that polychromy was life-like and the corpus and limbs were covered with parchment or animal skin. The figures of Christ resting in the tomb and the statuettes of the Risen Christ and Christ Ascending into the heavens were kissed during adoration. The statuettes of the naked Christ Child owned by nuns were intended to be touched, caressed, kissed, bathed and dressed in handmade robes. The figures of anonymous virgin saints (such as the one from St. Lawrence's Church, Nuremberg) were adapted so that they could be identified with a specific saint through the addition of their attributes, and by dressing them up in festive robes so that they could be carried in processions. Small-scale, portable sculptures were touched and kissed. The prayer nuts encouraged handlers to grasp and twist them in their hands. Small diptychs and triptych or panels and *tondi* were held in the hands in order to see their details, before being placed on a table or a shelf, or hung on the wall. Illuminated manuscripts and small-scale books were not only intended to be read, but also to be leafed through,

their pages being turned with fingers. Prints and playing cards were constantly touched, shuffled, and organised into series and decks, as desired by their handlers. These aspects define fifteenth-century art as being one based on the principle of tactile perception. We have forgotten about this rule through hanging our objects on walls, placing them in cases, and shutting them inside cabinets for prints and drawings in museum rooms. We have deprived these items of their real life – their mobility and sensory contact with the beholder.

III.3. Scale of the object and the technology of production

At times the scale of artworks constituted a purely technical issue. This included challenges such as transferring the artworks to a larger scale, as in the *Annunciation* based on the prototype from Rogier van der Weyden's workshop (Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten). The original piece from the Cistercian Monastery in Lichtenthal, near Baden-Baden – very small, 20 x 12cm – was enlarged 136 times by the Master of the Marian Panels from Lichtenthal in 1489 to the size of the monumental panel of the main altarpiece in the monastery's church (225 x 142cm, Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle)³⁴⁷. The procedures of copying and scaling are relatively well-studied. The production of monumental artworks depended on the practical issues such as procuring enough space in the workshop and other technological aspects (discussed in detail by Susie Nash; the present section is based on her analysis).³⁴⁸

347 A. Morath-Fromm, "Swabia and the Upper Rhine," in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck to Dürer...*, pp. 277–284, on p. 281; her, *Das Erbe der Markgrafen. Die Sammlung deutscher Malerei (1350–1550) in Karlsruhe*, coll. cat., Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, Ostfildern 2013, pp. 520 ff.

348 S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp.158–161 and 213–225.

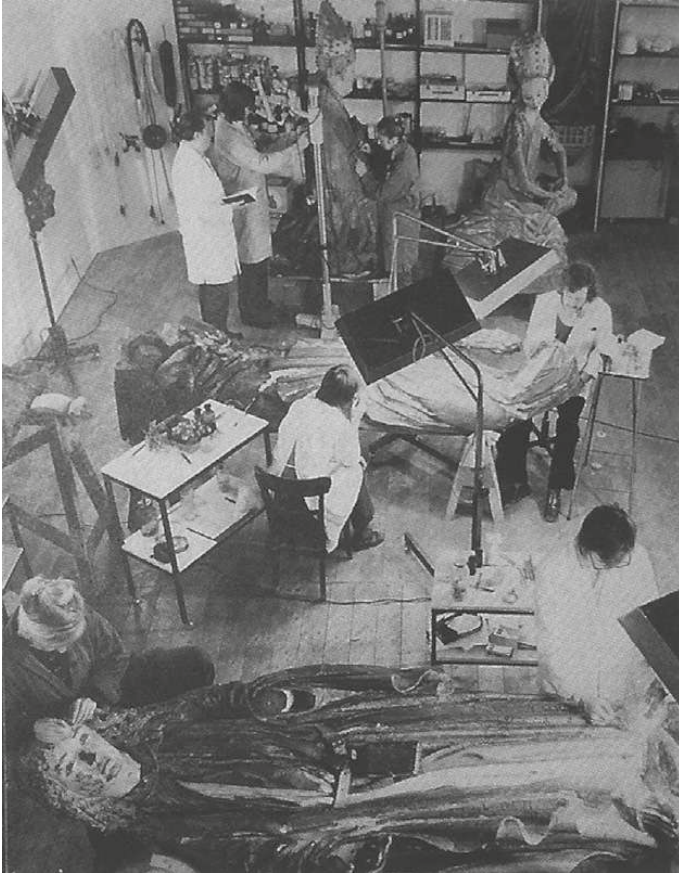


Fig. 458: Figures from the *Crucifixion Group* from Lübeck by Bernt Notke and his assistants, during conservation in 1971

The large-scale wooden figures had to be hollowed out to become lighter and to allow them to be transferred from the workshop to the place of their display. Bernt Notke executed the gigantic figures of the *Crucifixion Group* for the rood screen of Lübeck cathedral from three tree trunks, each around 3 meters tall. Viewed *in situ*, from the church pavement, they do not seem overwhelmingly colossal [figs. 78–79, 465]. However, when disassembled for conservation purposes they filled the space of the large conservation laboratory [fig. 458]. Therefore, the sculptor must have had at his disposal a huge workshop, suitable for accommodating these figures. Similarly, sculptors working in stone needed a spacious workshop to unload and work on monumental blocks. One example that illustrates this is of Jean de Liège, an artist working in the 1360s and 70s in Paris, who was commissioned

by King Charles V and the French courtly aristocracy. The inventory of his workshop lists twenty-four large and twenty-three mid-scale blocks of alabaster and marble, and a number of smaller pieces of stone; two complete tombstones and one carved altarpiece, as well as life-sized figures of the Virgin, John the Baptist, King Charles V and his wife Jeanne de Bourbon.³⁴⁹

The painters had to face similar challenges in painting monumental panels. In 1435–1445, Rogier van der Weyden painted a cycle called *The Justice of Trajan and Herkinbald* for the Golden Chamber of Brussels City Hall [cf. fig. 459].³⁵⁰ The cycle was formed of four panels measuring 4.5 metres in

349 A. Vidier, “Un tombier liégeois à Paris au XIV^e siècle. Inventaire de la succession de Hennequin de Liège (1382–1383),” *Mémoires de la Société de l’Histoire de Paris et de l’Île-de-France* 30, 1903, pp. 280–308.

350 Rogier van der Weyden’s *The Justice of Trajan and Herkinbald*: A.M. Cetto, “Der Berner Traian- und Herkinbald-Teppich,” *Jahrbuch des Bernischen Historischen Museums* 43/44, 1963/1964, Bern 1966; J.G. van Gelder, “Enige kanttekeningen bij de Gerechtigheidsstaferelen van Rogier van der Weyden,” in: *Rogier van der Weyden en zijn tijd*, (Internationaal Colloquium, Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België. Klasse der Schone Kunsten, 1964), Brussels 1974, pp. 119–142; M. Davies, *Rogier van der Weyden...*, (1972), pp. 208–209; J.H.A. de Ridder, *Gerechtigheidsstaferelen voor schepenhuzen in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden in de 14de, 15de en 16de eeuw*, Brussels 1989; A. Rapp Buri, M. Stucky-Schürer, *Zahm und wild. Basler und Straßburger Bildteppiche des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Mainz 1990, pp. 41–46, 74–76; L. von Wilckens, *Die textilen Künste von der Spätantike bis um 1500*, Munich 1991, pp. 47–54; E. Dhanens, *Rogier van der Weyden. Revisie van de documenten*, (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België. Klasse der Schonen Kunsten, 57, no. 59), Brussels 1995, pp. 59–73, 141 ff; De Vos Rogier 1999, pp. 57–60, cat. no. B 2; Kemperdick Rogier 1999/2007, pp. 24–27; A. Rapp Buri, M. Stucky-Schürer, *Burgundische Tapisserien*, Munich 2001, pp. 41–70; J. Van Leeuwen, “Trajan and Herkenbald: The combination of two ‘Exempla Justitiae’ in the medieval Low Countries,” in: “*Als ich can*”: *liber amicorum in memory of Professor Dr. Maurits Smeyers*, ed. by B. Cardon, J. Van der Stock et al., vol. 2, Leuven 2002, pp. 1483–1500; M. Stucky-Schürer, “Die Gerechtigkeits des Trajan und des Herkinbald. Zwei Exempla für die Rechtsprechung,” in: *Erscheinungsformen höfischer Kultur und ihre Träger im Mittelalter, Freiburger Colloquium 1998*, vol. I: *Literatur und Wandmalerei*, ed. by E.C. Lutz, J. Thali, R. Wetzels, Tübingen 2002, pp. 507–528; F. Thürlemann, *Rogier van der Weyden...*, pp. 27–31; M. van Vliedden, “New Light on the Scenes of Justice by Rogier van der Weyden: A Mural Representing the Justice of the Emperor Trajan from Wed 5–7 in Utrecht,” in: *Kunst & Region. Architektur und Kunst im*

height and jointly measuring 10.5 metres in width. Perhaps, it was the technical complexities presented by working on such a large scale that caused the artist to buy the buildings adjacent to his house on Cantersteen from an alderman of the city in 1443/1444. This new, spacious workshop included the *grootte poirte*, a large doorway, which would facilitate the transport of large-scale objects. Other artists bought or rented larger houses including: Jean de Liège in Paris, Stefan Lochner in Cologne, Hans Memling in Bruges, and Simon Marmion in Valenciennes. In turn, the city council prohibited Bernt Notke from expanding his house in Lübeck and in 1506 he had to demolish an illegally constructed extension.³⁵¹

Mittelalter, ed. by U.M. Bräuer, E.S. Klinkenberg, J. Westerman, Utrecht 2005, pp. 238–250; S. Kemperdick, “Robert Campin, Jacques Daret, Rogier van der Weyden: Die schriftliche Überlieferung,” in: Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, pp. 53–73, here pp. 67–68; P. Jezler in: *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, cat. no. 28; L. Campbell, “The New Pictorial Language of Rogier van der Weyden,” in: Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier* 2009, pp. 52–55; L. Campbell, “Rogier van der Weyden and Tapestry,” in: Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier*, pp. 218–250, esp. 240–246; A. Rapp, in: Campbell, Van der Stock *Rogier* 2009, cat. no. 3; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, chapters VI.4.4. and VIII.3.1; S. Hennig von Lange, *Die “Rauheit” der Fäden. Präsenz und Repräsentation auf dem Berner Trajan- und Herkinbaldeppich*,” in: *Beziehungsreiche Gewebe. Textilien im Mittelalter*, ed. by K. Böse, S. Tammen, Frankfurt a.M. 2012, pp. 138–161.

351 K. Petermann, *Bernt Notke. Arbeitsweise und Werkstattorganisation...*, pp. 19–24.

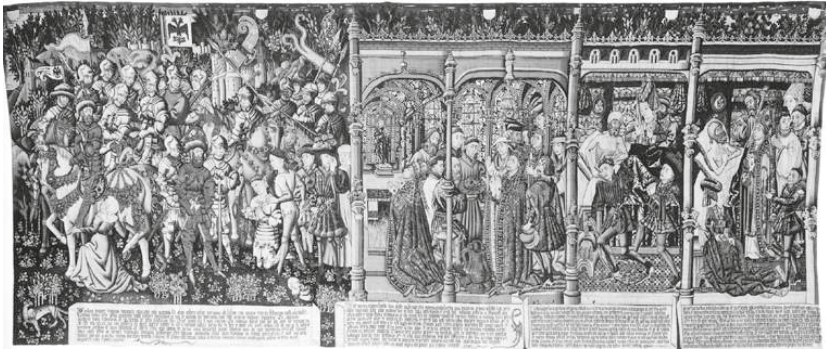


Fig. 459: *The Justice of Trajan and Herkinbald*, tapestry, 1461, Bern, Historisches Museum—repetition after the panels painted by Rogier van der Weyden for the Golden Chamber of the Brussels City Hall, 1435–1445

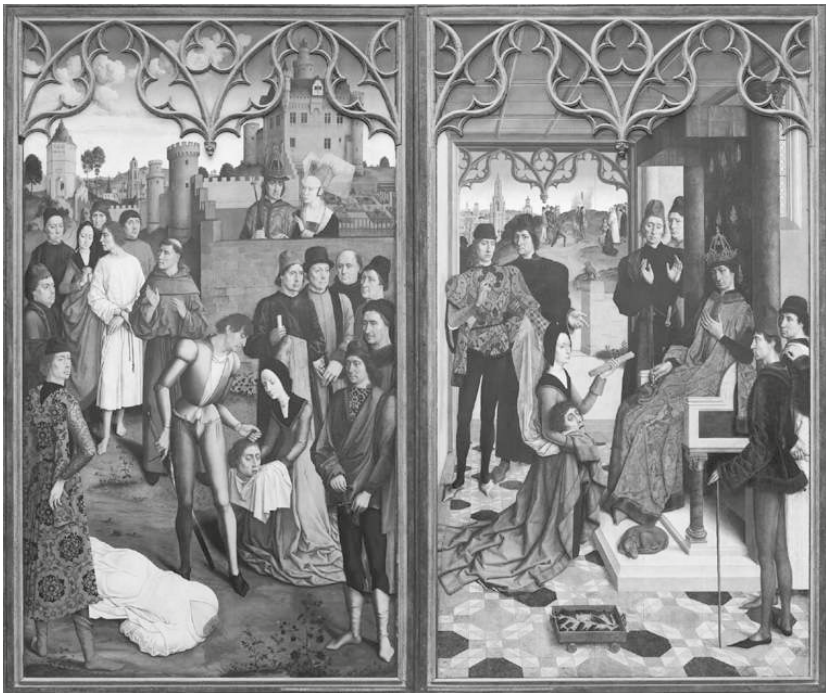


Fig. 460: Dirk Bouts and his workshop, *The Justice of Emperor Otto III (Beheading of the Innocent Count and Ordeal by Fire)* from the town hall in Leuven, 1471–1475 (completed by the assistants in 1482), Brussels, Musées Royaux de Beaux-Arts

In 1471–1475, Dirk Bouts painted the monumental *The Justice of Otto III* for the town hall in Leuven (completed by his assistants in 1482), with each panel measuring 3.43x2.02m including the frame [fig. 460]. The wooden panels were first delivered to the town hall and moved to the painter's workshop, one at a time, to be painted and returned to their intended location. The panels were moved out of the town hall through the windows on the ground floor, the largest in the edifice, with a purposefully made lifting system. After Bouts's death and the end of his workshop, probably in 1482, only two out of the four panels described in the contract had been executed.

The scale of tapestries, which were often monumental, entailed various technological difficulties. The Angers *Apocalypse* was designed by Jean Bondol (Jan Baudolf) and executed between 1373 and 1382, in the workshop of Nicolas Bataille and Robert Poinçon [fig. 343–344]. It included six pieces, each originally over 23 metres long and 4.5 metres high.³⁵² *Credo*, woven in 1388 at the Parisian workshop of Pierre de Beaumetz and Jacques Dourdin, measured 4.8 × 26.4m; *Nine Famous Knights and Virtuous Women*, 4.8 × 24 m. The large cycle of the *Story of Gideon*, commissioned by Philip the Good in 1448/1449 from Baudouin de Bailleul of Arras, woven between 1450 and 1453 in Tournai, in the workshops of Robert Dary and Jehan de l'Ortie (Lorties), was approximately one hundred metres long and six metres high.³⁵³ The cycle *Trojan War* (Zamora, Museo Catedralicio) produced around 1475–1490 in the workshop of Jehan Grenier, included six tapestries measuring 5 × 8m.³⁵⁴ To weave such a monumental work, the workshop needed a suitably large loom – with its width equal the height of the tapestry, as it was not possible to weave horizontally. The looms used for the Angers *Apocalypse* had to measure around 6 meters in width. The scale and the regulations of the considerable closeness of the warp threads (5–6 woolen threads and 6–8 silk threads per centimeter) affected the speed of labour. The production of a single tapestry measuring 5 × 8 meters would take thirty weavers between eight and sixteen months. It is therefore unsurprising that grand tapestries were the most expensive works of fifteenth-century art (chapter III.2.3).

352 See note 226.

353 J. Lestocquoy, "L'Atelier de Baudouin de Bailleul et la tapisserie de Gédéon," *Revue Belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art* VIII, 1938, pp. 119–137; S. McKendrick, "Baudouin (Baudouin) de Bailleul," in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 3, s.v.; J.Ch. Smith, *Portable propaganda – tapestries as princely metaphors ...*; A.H. van Buren, *Images monumentales de la Toison d'Or ...*

354 J.-P. Asselberghs, *Le tapisseries tournaisiennes de la Guerre de Troie* (1970), pp. 93–183; J.-P. Asselberghs, *Le tapisseries tournaisiennes de la Guerre de Troie*, (1972); S. McKendrick, "The Great History of Troya"..., pp. 43–82.



Fig. 461: Claus Sluter and Claus de Werve, *The Well of Patriarchs* (so-called *Well of Moses*), 1395–1404, Chartreuse de Champmol, Dijon

The carving of monumental sculptures in stone and wood required a different type of technical expertise. A notable example of a large-scale stone sculpture is the *Well of Moses* by Claus Sluter and Claux de Werve, created for the chartreuse of Champmol near Dijon, which was patronised by the Burgundian Dukes (1395–1404) [fig. 461].³⁵⁵ The surviving base supported the original Great Cross with Mary Magdalene kneeling at its foot (the fragments of the statue together with the head, body and legs of the Crucified Christ are preserved in the Musée Archéologique in Dijon). The base decorated with Old Testament prophets and angels is 4 meters tall, while the original structure measured approximately 11 meters [figs. 462–463]. The *Well of Moses* – apart from its symbolic meaning (alluding to the Crucified Christ as the source of living water, who offers salvation through ablution: cleansing from sin) – was entirely practical. The monastery was built on wet ground and the well gathered the excess water. The characteristics of the land gave a name to the site, as Champmol literally means ‘soft, muddy ground.’ Therefore, Sluter’s work was primarily a practical solution.

355 *Well of Moses (Well of Patriarchs)* by Claus Sluter and Claux de Werve in Champmol: R. Prochno, *Die Kartause von Champmol. Grablege der burgundischen Herzöge 1364–1477*, Berlin 2002; S. Nash, “Claus Sluter’s ‘Well of Moses’ for the Chartreuse de Champmol reconsidered (I–III),” *The Burlington Magazine* 147, 2005, no. 1233, pp. 798–809, 148, 2006, no. 1240, pp. 456–467 and 150, 2008, no. 1268, pp. 724–741. See also: S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 215–216; S. Jugie et al., *Die Kartause von Champmol und der Mosesbrunnen*, Paris 2004; I. Denis et al., “La restauration du Puits de Moïse. Chartreuse de Champmol, Dijon,” *Monumental* 2004, no. 2; E.Th. Kubina, *Der Mosesbrunnen im Kontext*, MA Thesis, University of Vienna 2007; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. I, chapter VIII.4.



Fig. 462: *The Well of Patriarchs* from the Chartreuse de Champmol – reconstruction by Susie Nash



Fig. 463: *The Well of Patriarchs* from the Chartreuse de Champmol – reconstruction with the group of three figures under the cross

Due to the wet ground the construction of the heavy, monumental stone well was in itself a remarkable feat of engineering. Sluter, assisted by Claux de Werve, meticulously designed the entire structure. The upper section of the base with the prophets was erected from seventeen stone blocks, skillfully cut and assembled in eight horizontal layers, each formed of two or three pieces cut at different angles for structural stability.³⁵⁶ The monument

356 M. Chateignère, “Problèmes poses par la restauration du Puits de Moïse. Aspects techniques,” in: *Actes de Journées internationals Calus Sluter*, Dijon 1992, pp. 85–96.

consisted of a base and a column topped by the cross reinforced by an iron rod running through the shaft of the column and the vertical beam of the cross. The rod was made of an iron-lead alloy to prevent it from rusting and to ensure its hardness.

The number of figures under the cross remains unclear. Susie Nash discovered only a single opening in the upper section of the base for the attaching of the figure of Mary Magdalene, though previous scholars have argued for a design that also included traditional figures of the Virgin and John the Evangelist [fig. 462]. In 1508, a copy of the monument was made for the Hôpital du Saint-Esprit in Dijon, which lacks figures under the cross [fig. 463]. The documents seem to confirm a number of figures under the cross. In 1400, Claux de Werve and Rogier de Westerhan, Sluter's assistants, received payment for the cutting of several figures "on the terrace of the cross" ("plus[ieur]s ymaiges de p[ier]re qui sont et seront mis et assis sur la terrasse de la croix de p[ier]re estant ou my lieu du grant cloistre desdis chartreux..."³⁵⁷), and the document of payment to Claux de Werve of 1399 lists a statue of the Virgin ("une ymaige de N[otr]e Dame, et en un crucefé pour le grant croix que fait ledit Claus pour mecre ou grant cloistre des religieux ch[ar]treux de Champmol lez Dijon").³⁵⁸ Perhaps, contrary to the hypothesis advanced by Nash, the figures were designed and partially executed (the statue of Mary Magdalene) for the terrace of the cross, but never actually installed there as their considerable weight would have threatened the stability of the entire monument, already at risk due to the wet ground. The figure of Mary Magdalene would be placed at the foot of the cross to provide structural support. Other statues were added only at an unknown, later date, and certainly after 1508 (the date of the copy for the Hôpital du Saint-Esprit). The descriptions of the monument from 1736 and 1789 list various figures under the cross (though they do not specify the figure of the Virgin recorded in the payment issued to Claux de Werve).³⁵⁹

357 S. Nash, "Claus Sluter's 'Well of Moses'...", p. 802.

358 R. Prochno, *Die Kartause von Champmol. Grablege der burgundischen Herzöge 1364–1477*, Berlin 2002, p. 276. Susie Nash ("Claus Sluter's 'Well of Moses...") believes that the figure of *Notre Dame*, divided by the punctuation from the *crucefé pour le grant croix*, is a reference to a different statue of the Virgin, produced in great numbers by the Sluter's workshop in Champmol.

359 "On voit dans le milieu un ped d'estail orné de statues de quelques Prophètes: il est surmonté d'une grande Croix de pierre de Tonnerre taillée par Claux Sluter; le même ouvrier fit les Images qui environnent la Croix: elles sont de pierre blanche et chaque figure porte six pieds de haut sur un pied et demi d'épaisseur; cet ouvrage est d'un goût et d'une correction peu connue en ce tems-là" (1736) – R. Prochno, *Die Kartause von Champmol...*, p. 227. The description from 1789 is quoted in K. Morand, *Claus Sluter. Artist at the Court of Burgundy*, London 1991, p. 342.

Sluter carefully selected the stone for the well. The figures of the patriarchs, angels and Mary Magdalene are carved from the soft, highly malleable limestone, quarried locally at Asnières. The figure of Christ and probably also the cross, were carved from harder, denser sandstone transported from a distant quarry at Tonnerre, where Sluter travelled on several occasions from Dijon to personally select and oversee the transport of the material. The cross was carved in a durable and solid stone because it was high and slim; the diameter of the beams was around 15–17.5cm (as inferred from the reach and shape of the shoulders and the surviving parts of Mary Magdalene's arms, originally wrapped around the cross). The imposing height of the cross was important for its visibility from a distance, and from every part of the vast courtyard, which measured over 100m². Finally, the upper slate of the platform, which crowned the base with the patriarchs, was carved in waterproof local stone that was resistant to erosion, from the quarry at Ys. This part of the monument was most exposed, and most prone to collecting rainwater, and its durability was paramount to the safety of the figures of angels and patriarchs carved in softer limestone.

The documents confirm that the entire project was carefully orchestrated. The stone was delivered in sequences, with new sculptural material arriving only after the previous stone had been carved and was permitted to leave the workshop established at the ducal palace in Dijon. The finished figures were packed individually into specially made boxes and transported to Champmol, where another workshop was responsible for assembling and installing the sculptures. The work was coordinated in such a way that the figures were installed from the top of the monument downwards, to avoid any damage to the sections already executed, for instance by raising the scaffolding on the base next to the carved patriarchs. The installation sequence included first the blocks of the architectural pedestal and the upper platform ('terrace'), then the cross itself, with the figures of Christ and Mary Magdalene, and then the angels, and finally the patriarchs at the sides (these were installed in two parts: firstly, in 1402, the figures of David, Jeremiah and Moses and subsequently, in 1403/1404, Daniel, Isaiah and Zachariah). The wings of the angels were carved in blocks forming the frieze of the pedestal, whilst their bodies are carved in separate blocks and attached with metal joins [fig. 464]. It seems that the figures of the patriarchs were assembled in a similar way. Other elements were made in metal, such as the halo of Mary Magdalene, or Jeremiah's glasses (now lost, but originally commissioned from a goldsmith's workshop from Dijon).



Fig. 464: Claux de Werve, figures of angels from the *Well of Patriarchs* in Champmol: joins between the wings and the figure, and the stone blocks



Fig. 465: Bernt Notke and his workshop, *Crucifixion with Bishop Albert Krummedick*, 1472–1477, Lübeck Cathedral



Fig. 466: Claus Berg, *St. Andrew*, c. 1530, Güstrow Cathedral

It was a great technological challenge for late Gothic woodcarvers to reconcile the monumental quality of great sculptural commissions with the desire to show the dynamism of the forms.

The *Crucifixion* on the rood screen of Lübeck cathedral by Bernt Notke (1472–1477) [figs. 78–79, 465] well illustrates these challenges. The group was mentioned before as an example of an airy composition, “suspended” in the ecclesiastical space and observed by the faithful walking down the nave towards the choir (chapter II.1).³⁶⁰ The group is carved in oak wood, a typical material for sculptors and carpenters working in northern Germany and the Baltic region. It is a hard and durable material, but is difficult to work and resistant to the deep modelling of forms. It can be carved almost across the entire diameter of the trunk, apart from the core, both in heartwood and sapwood. Oak is very solid, with fairly equal levels of moisture throughout

360 For the bibliography – see note 23.

the trunk; this ensured the even drying of the wood, unlike limewood (see below), and lowered the risk of internal cracks. If the sculptor is able to carve in it the protruding parts – if he has sufficient strength and patience – the work can be created in a single piece of wood. Claus Berg carved the figure of St. Andrew for the cathedral in Güstrow (c. 1530) from a single tree trunk, with a deep undercutting of the draperies [fig. 466]. However, the oak wood is heavy and large-scale figures had to be hollowed out. Notke had to consider the stress placed by the sculptures on the rood screen, and the weight of the monumental figure of Christ (measuring 3.38 m.!) on the cross. Consequently, the figures are extensively hollowed out (the wooden shell is so thin that it has cracked in various places, and it is possible to peer inside the statue). Moreover, the sculptor used two different types of wood: for the architectural construction, the beam and the cross he used oak from the Baltic area (Prussia, Pomerania and Lithuania), which was well-seasoned and had been dried; for the figures he used young, local and unseasoned oak. Dendrochronological analysis has informed our understanding of the artistic process and revealed that the wood for the figure of St. John was cut during the winter of 1470/1471, and the inscription inside the figure suggests at least partial completion in 1472. To deal with the freshness of unseasoned wood, which had to be polychromed and gilded, and to reduce the risk of woodworms, Notke seared figures as is clear from the traces of soot on their surface, as well as singed sections in the hollowed-out areas and cracks on the surface. Friedrich Herlin followed the same procedure for the main altarpiece of Sankt Jakob's church in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (see below).

Notke did not carve all the Lübeck figures from a single tree trunk. St. John's left arm and shoulder, the Virgin's right arm, the base of Mary Magdalene, her turban, the protruding knee and foot were carved from separate pieces of wood; the figure of the patron, Bishop Krummedick, is formed of three parts, which were glued together or assembled with nails.

The Angelic Salutation by Veit Stoss, from St. Lawrence's church in Nuremberg (1517–1518), was discussed earlier in relation to the display that encouraged the viewer to move around the sculpture and to the ritual veiling and unveiling of the image (chapter III.2 and III.2.4) [figs. 59–61, 467–468].³⁶¹ From a technical perspective, the object is a true masterpiece with two figures encompassed by a garland of flowers, symbolizing the rosary. The sculpture is monumental: 5.12m in diameter; the height of the Virgin is 2.18m, and the angel is 2.15m. Stoss carved the sculptures from an unusually thick limewood trunk – the type of wood most commonly used in southern Germany and in central Europe, as it is highly plastic, soft and

361 For the bibliography – see note 9.

ease to carve, allowing for the creation of protruding parts. The sculptor wanted to achieve an airy composition, with elements clearly separated from the central core of the construction. To achieve this, he employed the same technical solution as Bernt Notke in the Lübeck *Crucifixion*. The patron Anton Tucher the Young listed in his account book a commission for the tree from St. Sebald's forest near Nuremberg, cut on 12th March 1517. The sculpture was installed in the choir on 17th June 1518, only fifteen months later. Therefore, Stoss, like Notke, worked in fresh, unseasoned wood, still moist, contrary to standard workshop practice and guild regulations.



Fig. 467: Veit Stoss, *Angelic Salutation* (*Englischer Gruß* or *Engelsgruß*), 1517–1518, Nuremberg, Church of St. Lawrence



Fig. 468: Veit Stoss, *Angelic Salutation* – figures of Mary and the angel



Fig. 469: Veit Stoss, *St. Roch*, c. 1510–1512, Florence, Santissima Annunziata; overall view and detail

Stoss consciously employed this alternative technique to achieve the deep undercutting of draperies and hair. The moisture ensured the integrity of the protruding parts during the carving process. The water density differs greatly between sections of the limewood trunk: low in the heartwood (the dry core, that does not conduct water), and high in the surrounding sapwood (the external ring of the trunk, that does conduct water); when it dries it shrinks at different speeds and is prone to cracking.³⁶² This is why the woodcarvers and sculptors had to hollow out the trunks and work with sapwood (unlike the painters, who created their panels from heartwood). If figures were meant to be carved in a full trunk, it was only the sapwood that was used, and in that instance they had to be proportionately smaller in diameter, and more contained, such as the figure of *St. Roch* by Stoss for the church of the Santissima Annunziata in Florence, probably commissioned by one of the German merchants residing in the city, and executed c. 1510–1512 [fig. 469].³⁶³ The figure is carved in a single tree trunk with just one element added – a section of the drapery on the back, which supports one of the more fragile sections of the statue, namely the pilgrim's staff.

Both figures of the *Angelic Salutation* were hollowed out to reduce their weight, allowing them to be suspended at an altitude of 8 meters, and for the sculpture to be lifted and lowered on a chain. The statues are shells nearly as thin as an egg or mussel shells. Stoss reduced the weight by eliminating the mass of the composition, making it extremely airy. To make the group even lighter and to minimize the risk of internal tensions within the wood, he added smaller pieces to the work that were carved separately, such as the angels, with flowing draperies, behind the two main figures. The head of the archangel Gabriel has not been hollowed out. From the back the statues were closed with separate, flat parts. One is decorated with the flowing curls of the Virgin, whilst the other supports the angel's wings. The shells and the areas when parts were added are concealed under the polychromy.

362 For the properties of limewood and the process of carving see: M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer...*, pp. 42–61.

363 M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer...*, pp. 199–211 and 346–347.



Fig. 470: Friedrich Herlin, retable of the main altar in the Church of Sankt Jakob in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, 1466

The large scale of carved altarpieces and monuments posed serious challenges for their transport, as in the case of Friedrich Herlin's high altarpiece for Sankt Jakob's church in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (1466) [fig. 470].³⁶⁴ Herlin was primarily a painter and his shop created works in a range of techniques mostly through subcontracting commissions to other specialized

364 Friedrich Herlin, *The main altarpiece of Sankt Jakob's church in Rothenburg ob der Tauber*: K.-W. Bachmann, E. Oellermann, J. Taubert, "The Conservation and Technique of the Herlin Altarpiece (1466)," *Studies in Conservation* 15, 1970, pp. 327–369; M. Broekman-Bokstijn et al., "The Scientific Examination of the Polychromed Sculpture in the Herlin Altarpiece," *Studies in Conservation* 15, 1970, pp. 370–400; V. Liedke, "Zwei Rechnungsbelege zur Ausführung des Hochaltars in der Jakobskirche zu Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ein Werk

workshops. The shrine and the frame of the wings of the altarpiece were executed by carpenters and woodcarvers from outside his workshop – *Schreinmacher*. By contrast, Stoss controlled (though with assistants) the full range of his artistic activities: the seasoning and preparation of the wood; its carving and painting; the application of polychromy and gilding. In turn, Bernt Notke – who trained as a painter – led a multimedia workshop that employed sculptors, woodcarvers, painters and painters of polychromy. Herlin must have coordinated the production of individual parts and the logistics of their transport, as well as the assembling of the work at its final destination. Herlin was an entrepreneur – a person who oversaw the production of carved and painted altarpieces, rather than being artistically responsible for their making – an artist-painter, though he was listed as such in the town’s records. His workshop was in Nördlingen, at a distance of over 75km from Rothenburg. The altarpiece that was to be transported between the two cities is truly monumental: 7.31m in width and 8.54m in height. It is formed of a huge carved shrine containing the scene of the Crucifixion and figures of saints, as well as painted wings and a predella; its high crowning with tracery shows the figure of Christ as a Man of Sorrows. The work was executed in sections, to facilitate the transport to distant Nördlingen, and to ensure that the work could be moved into the church through the doors

des Nördlinger Malers Friedrich Herlin vom Jahr 1466,” *Ars Bavarica* 13, 1979, pp. 43–52; R. Kahsnitz, *Carved Splendor...*; Ch. Metzger, “Friedrich Herlins Rothenburger Altar,” in: *Die oberdeutschen Reichsstädte und ihre Heiligenkulte. Traditionen und Ausprägungen zwischen Stadt, Ritterorden und Reich*, ed. K. Herbers, (Jakobus-Studien 16), Tübingen 2005, pp. 101–118; J. Taubert, *Farbige Skulpturen. Bedeutung, Fassung, Restaurierung*, new edition with complementary texts by K.-W. Bachmann, E. Oellermann et al., ed. by M.D. Marincola, Munich 2015 (in English: *Polychrome sculpture: Meaning, form, conservation*, The Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles 2015), pp. 170–208. Further literature on **Friedrich Herlin**: H. Baumhauer, *Der Herlin-Altar zu Bopfingen und seine Stadtkirche*, Stuttgart 1981; I. Bähr, “Zur Entwicklung des Altarretabels und seiner Bekrönung vor 1475,” *Städel-Jahrbuch* N.F. 15, 1995 (1996), pp. 85–120; R. Krüger, *Friedrich Herlin. Maler und Altarbauunternehmer*, PhD Thesis, Freie Universität, Berlin 1997; A. Kugler, M. Nebel, *Friedrich Herlin. Eine spätgotische Bilderwelt*, Stadtmuseum Nördlingen 2000; Ch. Metzger, “Neues vom Nördlinger Hochaltar,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 54/55, 2000/2001 (2003), pp. 104–126; C. Grimm, *Meister oder Schüler. Berühmte Werke auf dem Prüfstand*, Stuttgart–Zürich 2002; R. Kahsnitz, *Carved Splendor...*, pp. 40–57 (altarpiece from St. George’s church in Nördlingen).

and assembled *in situ* without specialized scaffolding and cranes. Executed by the carpenter Hans Waidenlich, the shrine is formed of two parts (1.8m in width and 0.5m in depth each), and joined by a metal rod when delivered to Rothenburg. The rod was covered by the cross and the figure of the Crucified Christ. The joins were filled with papier-mâché and painted over. At the beginning, the parts polychromed and gilded in Herlin's workshop were assembled with the cross, the figure of Christ and four surrounding angels added later, which were polychromed and gilded by another contracted workshop. The shrine was assembled using iron rods attached to the rear wall, which stabilized the construction during the opening of the wings. During its assembly, it turned out that the wings did not open and shut evenly, because the distance between their lower edge and the base of the shrine was too small; the problem was solved by the insertion of the additions painted in red.

The transport and assembly of a large-scale altarpiece posed an even greater challenge in the case of the altarpiece in the church of Sankt Wolfgang in Upper Austria (Salzkammergut region, south of Salzburg), commissioned in 1471 and executed between 1477/1479 and 1481 by Michael Pacher [fig. 292–294].³⁶⁵ This painter and sculptor led the workshop in Bruneck in South Tirol, a city some 350km away from Sankt Wolfgang – a long distance with a road leading up through the high mountains. The thing to be transported was monumental and structurally complex. The altarpiece, with open wings, measured 10.88m in height and 6.6m in width. Moreover, it has a prominent openwork filigree crowning with the Crucifixion and the Deësis groups, with which its height amounts to 11.5m. When assembled the spire of the crowning had to be cut down by 60cm. The shrine, which is unusually deep, measuring 72cm in depth, contained seventy-one polychromed and gilded sculptures [fig. 471], and the wings contained twenty-four painted panels. The shrine was carved in pine tree (mountain pine), the frame and wings in spruce wood, and the figures in limewood.

365 For the bibliography – see note 53.



Fig. 471: Michael Pacher, *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin*, 1471–1481, in the Church of Sankt Wolfgang – detail of the Coronation of the Virgin

The elements of the altarpiece had to be transported via a difficult mountain path through the Alps, the Brenner Pass, and then along a lengthy route that led from Bruneck, through Sterzing, Innsbruck, Schwaz, Kufstein, and Salzburg to the final destination – the pilgrim site by the Wolfgangsee lake, south of the Mondsee lake. The last section of the journey included river transport, on the Inn river. The contract signed on 13th December 1471 by Benedikte Eck, abbott of the convent in Mondsee, to which the church in Sankt Wolfgang belonged, included a stipulation about splitting the costs of transport between the patron and the artist. However, it was the responsibility of the artist to ensure the safe delivery of the altarpiece.³⁶⁶ Therefore, the artist had to personally accompany the artwork and endure the difficult road to its final location. It seems that Pacher transported the shrine in one piece and the wings and the crowning in separate crates; the sculptures were already installed in the shrine. If the individual sections of the shrine were to be assembled *in situ*, it would not have been necessary to cut down the spire.

366 For the contract see N. Rasmø, *Michael Pacher*, chapter 4.



Fig. 472: Pere Johan (Pere Joan), Hans de Suabia (Hans Peter Danzer, Ans Piet d’Danso, Hans von Gmünd), Francí Gomar, main altar of La Seo Cathedral in Saragossa, 1434–1483

Therefore, the transport and the assembly of the work were extremely important, and they often determined the technique and the form of monumental altarpieces. It is hardly surprising that the Spanish contracts for the elaborate, carved and painted wall *retablos* include detailed discussion of these and related issues.³⁶⁷ I have already discussed (chapter II.3) the monumental 16 x 10m altarpiece from La Seo cathedral in Saragossa, carved

367 J. Berg Sobré, *Behind the Altar Table...*, pp. 267–337.

in costly alabaster [fig. 135, 472]. One kind of stone was brought without much trouble from the local quarry in Gelsa; the other kind, the finer stone, which came from near Girona, had to be transported from some 460 km away. Pere Johan, one of the first artists working on the altarpiece, visited several quarries and travelled over one thousand kilometres in search of the highest quality material. This commission testifies to the great difficulties that were encountered when obtaining suitable materials, as well as in their transport to distant locations.

III.4. Legible and illegible: looking at paintings through a magnifying glass

The scale of artworks was closely related to their legibility. Since Aristotle, cognitive perceptibility (*aisthêton*) – the optimal scale of a work that facilitated its immediate and full recognition, or apprehension of the whole at a single gaze – has always been present in the theory of art. “Beauty depends on magnitude and order,” wrote the philosopher in his *Poetics*, “Hence a very small animal organism cannot be beautiful; for the view of it is confused; the object being seen in almost imperceptible in a moment of time. Nor, again, can one of vast size be beautiful; for as the eye cannot take it all in at once, the unity and sense of the whole is lost for the spectator; such as, for instance if there were one a thousand miles long. As, therefore, in the case of animate bodies and organisms a certain magnitude is necessary, and a magnitude which may be easily embraced in one view; so, in the plot, a certain length is necessary, and a length which can be easily embraced by the memory.”³⁶⁸

During the Middle Ages thinkers adopted this rule for composing their plots, and introduced the term measurability (*dimensio* in the works of e.g. St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas), which was applied to every perceivable form that contained beauty. In the fifteenth century, it was employed by Leon Battista Alberti in the theory of modular proportionate measurements, that is, in the theory of perspective developed in *De Pictura* (1435). The categories of perceptibility, clarity and legibility were pertinent to monumental works and also to the small-scale or miniature works preferred towards the late Middle Ages.

368 Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. S.H. Butcher, chap. VII.



Fig. 473: Jean Pucelle, *The Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2 – the facsimile copy held in the hands by a reader



Fig. 474: Jean Pucelle, *The Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2

The illuminated 'microbooks' discussed above demonstrate the challenges posed by the scale to the eyesight of the viewer-reader. *The Book of Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux* (1324–1328, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2) [figs. 41–42, 153–154, 473–474] by Jean Pucelle, were commissioned by Charles IV for his wife, the queen of France. To ensure the legibility of the text in the tiny manuscript with pages measuring only 9.4×6.4 cm, the letters were proportionately huge: 2.5–3 mm in height (2 millimetres is the height of the font in a contemporary book that I have open on my desk) [fig. 473]. By comparison, the scenes at the margins of the main miniatures include figures that are truly microscopic, at only a couple of millimetres in height. Consequently, they are best examined using a magnifying glass, or enlarged on a computer screen, as I do it at this very moment. However, the French queen did not have such equipment at her disposal. She was expected to look intently at the miniatures, focusing her gaze and attention on them for a prolonged period of time. At that time, she was only eighteen and probably had a good eyesight. That was not the case of all readers of these miniature manuscripts. Perhaps, to increase the legibility of these small pages, artists often painted the scenes *en grisaille* or *semi-grisaille*, highlighting the linear quality of the design and not simply emphasising the skilful sophistication of artistic execution that was characteristic of the courtly culture of the day [fig. 474].

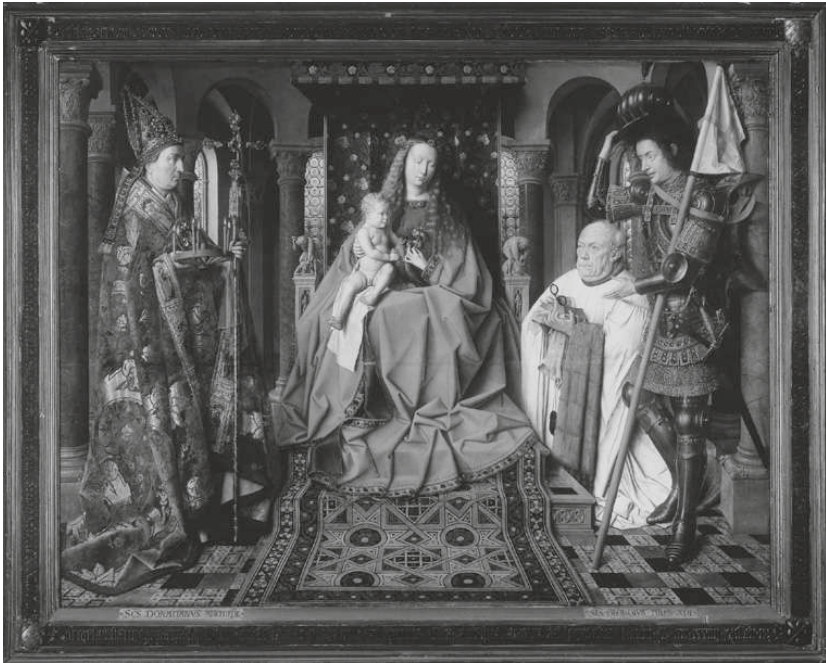


Fig. 475: Jan van Eyck, *Madonna van der Paele*, 1434–1436, Bruges, Groeningemuseum

Joris van der Paele, the canon of St. Donatianus church in Bruges, who features in the famous painting by Jan van Eyck was clearly short-sighted (1434–1436, Bruges, Groeningemuseum).³⁶⁹ He had to wear glasses for reading. The situation depicted in the Van Eyck's work is realistic [figs. 475,

369 Joris van der Paele and his *Madonna* by Jan van Eyck: M.P.J. Martens, "Patronage," in: *Early Netherlandish Painting: Rediscovery...*, pp. 366–377; A. Janssens de Bisthoven, M. Baes-Dondeyne, D. De Vos, *Stedelijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (Groeningemuseum) Brugge, (De Vlaamse primitieven I. Corpus van de vijftiende-eeuwse schilderkunst in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden)*, Brussels 1981, pp. 193–233. See also: E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting...*; G. Busch, *Jan van Eyck. Die Madonna des Kanonikus Paele*, Stuttgart 1959; A. Viaene, "Het graafpaneel van kanunnik van der Paele, voltooid in 1436 door Jan van Eyck (Groeningemuseum Brugge)," *Biekorf* 66, 1965, pp. 257–264; M.J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (1967), pp. 41–43; A. Dewitte, "De kapelanie-stichtingen van Kanunnik van der Paele, Brugge 1434 en 1443," *Biekorf* 72, 1971, pp. 15–30; V.J. Gilbert, *Van Eyck's Green Parrot*, London 1972; M.L. Shapiro, "The Van der Paele Altarpiece," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 1, 1974, pp. 1–22; L. Naftulin, "A Note on the Iconography of the Van der Paele

Madonna,” *Oud Holland* 86, 1971, pp. 3–8; R. de Keyser, “De Kanunnik Van der Paele,” *Spiegel Historiaal* 6, 1971, pp. 336–343; R. de Keyser, “Paele, Joris van der,” in: *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*, V, Brussels 1972, pp. 673–677; D.M. Hitchcock, *The Iconography of the Van der Paele Madonna by Jan Van Eyck*, dissertation, Princeton University, 1977; R. Terner, “Bemerkungen zur ‘Madonna des Kanonikus van der Paele,’” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 42, 1979, pp. 83–91; D. De Vos, *Stedelijke Musea Brugge, Catalogus schilderijen 15de en 16de eeuw*, Bruges 1979; E. Dhanens, *Hubert en Jan van Eyck...*; C.J. Purtle, “The Marian Paintings of Jan van Eyck, Princeton 1982, pp. 93–95; H. Pauwels, Van Eycks Madonna Van der Paele opnieuw bekeken,” *Jaarboek van de Stedelijke Musea Brugge* 2, 1983/1985, pp. 223–240; B.G. Lane, “The Case of Canon van der Paele,” *Source* 9, 1990, 2, pp. 1–6; C. Harbison, *Jan van Eyck: The Play of Realism*, London 1991, pp. 57–60; M.B. Hall, *Color and Meaning: Practice and Theory in Renaissance Painting*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge–New York 1992, pp. 69–74; M.P.J. Martens, *Artistic Patronage in Bruges Institutions...*, pp. 171–172; W. Wilhelmy, *Der altniederländische Realismus und seine Funktionen: Studien zur kirchlichen Bildpropaganda des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Münster–Hamburg 1993, pp. 86–94; M.W. Ainsworth, “Revelations about Jan van Eyck’s ‘Virgin and child with saints Donatian and George, and the canon van der Paele,’” in: *Jérôme Bosch et son entourage et autres études*, (Le Dessin sous-jacent et de la Technologie dans la Peinture, colloque 14, 2001), ed. by H. Verougstraete, R. Van Schoute, Leuven 2003, pp. 273–285; B.L. Rothstein, *On the Order of Seeing in the Burgundian Netherlands...*; B. Rothstein, *Vision and Devotion in Jan van Eyck’s Virgin and Child with Canon Joris van der Paele*, pp. 262–276; M.W. Ainsworth, “Revelations about Jan van Eyck’s ‘Virgin and Child with Saints Donatian and George, and the Canon van der Paele,’” in: *Jérôme Bosch et son entourage et autre études*, (Le dessin sous-jacent et la technologie dans la peinture 14), ed. by H. Verougstraete, Leuven 2003, pp. 273–285; J.L. Ward, “Disguised Symbolism as Enactive Symbolism in Van Eyck’s Paintings,” *Artibus et Historiae* 15, 1994, pp. 9–53, esp. pp. 24–25, 38–45; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck*, (2008) pp. 56–60; S. Hanley, “Optical Symbolism as Optical Description: A Case Study of Canon Van der Paele’s Spectacles,” *Journal of Historians of the Netherlandish Art* 1, 2009, (on-line: www.jhna.org); T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 19; A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, chapters VI.2.2.2 and IX.2.1; D. Brine, “Jan van Eyck, Canon Joris van der Paele, and the Art of Commemoration,” *The Art Bulletin* 96, 2014, no. 3, pp. 265–287; J.L. Smith, “Jan van Eyck’s typology of spiritual knighthood in the ‘Van der Paele Madonna,’” in: *Imago exegetica: Visual images as exegetical instruments, 1400–1700*, ed. by W.S. Melion, J. Clifton, M. Weemans, Leiden–Boston 2014, pp. 45–71; D. Brine, *Pious Memories: The wall-mounted memorial in the Burgundian Netherlands*, Leiden 2015 (Studies in Netherlandish art and cultural history 13), pp. 179–208; Ch.L. Diedrichs, *Ohne Brille sieht man mehr. Jan van Eyck “Die Madonna des Kanonikus Georg van der Paele,”* (Einblicke – Kunstgeschichte in Einzelwerken 3), Norderstedt 2016; D. Brine, “Reflection and remembrance in Jan van Eyck’s Van der Paele Virgin,” *Art history* 41, September 2018, pp. 600–623; M. Martens, T.-H. Borchert,

476]. However, as has been pointed out, glasses can have a symbolic meaning, acting as a metonymy of spiritual, contemplative seeing and as a metaphor of physical short-sightedness. The glasses determine the central aspect of the painting's meaning, conflating the dualism of two figures of speech, *metaphor-metonymy*, theorised by Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss.³⁷⁰ However, they are primarily an object: tangible, concrete and referencing a specific body. They are also the body's metonymy, a substitution for the body of a real person of the patron and the represented figure. Thus, they constitute the metonymy of the 'social body,' which is 'discursive,' 'institutionalised,' and culturally 'constructed' (Michel Foucault). This is the embodiment of the local collectivity, and of the individual, material and biological body – the “body as an experience” (a concept of growing importance in posthumanist philosophy and historiography, and in post-gender theory, that has been previously contrasted with the concepts of *sex* and *gender* by one of the founders of feminist studies, Judith Butler).³⁷¹

J. Dumolyn, J. De Smet, F. Van Dam, *Van Eyck*, passim; J.L. Meulemeester, *Jan van Eyck & Brugge*, Oostkamp 2020, forthcoming.

370 For metonymy in writing history and the sphere of representations cf. E. Runia, “Presence,” *History & Theory*, vol. 45, 2006, issue 1, pp. 1–29.

371 J. Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”*, London–New York 1993. About the concept of “the body as an experience” in post-modern and posthumanist historiography see K. Canning, “The Body as Method? Reflections on the Place of the Body in Gender History,” *Gender & History*, vol.11, 1999, issue 3, pp. 499–513 (with previous bibliography).



Fig. 476: Jan van Eyck, *Madonna van der Paele* – detail

The body of Canon Van der Paele, old and weak, experiences its physicality through its glasses, the evidence of presbyopia. The obesity and elderly, wrinkled skin, smattered with age spots, further testify to the condition of the aging body. But the glasses – paradoxically- are most visible here, and painted in such a way that they magnify the text of the prayer book held by the patron. Van Eyck showed the actual process of enlarging and focusing that increases clarity and legibility – adjusting to the needs of the frail body, and at the same time the representation of symbolic discourse. *Magnificatio* – the optical magnification – had metaphorical and symbolic connotations.³⁷² Beyond its literal meaning, the term also referred to an ‘abundance of glory,’ and to ‘exaltation,’ and ‘adoration,’ as in Mary’s hymn, the *Magnificat* (*My soul doth magnify the Lord*), as well as to the ‘expansion,’ and ‘enrichment’ of something. In reference to the Virgin, the magnification was used to express her growing significance in the act of

372 J. Neaman, “Magnification as Metaphor,” in: *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1989 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by W.M. Ormrod, Stamford 1991, pp. 105–121. See also S. Hanley, “Optical Symbolism as Optical Description...,” pp. 7–8.

the Incarnation. In that case, the symbolic body links with the material body: conception and birth are ‘magnifying’ actions: increasing the size of the population, and in this case enriching humanity with the physical presence of its Saviour.

The optical magnification of the text in the prayer book through the lens of the glasses reminds the viewers of their corporeality, the limitations of their bodily eyes, and invites more intense looking. The focused gaze will observe other visual reductions: details of the figures carved on the capitals, embroidered motifs on St. Donatianus’ cope or the reflection of a tiny figure in St. George’s shield (probably a *pars pro toto* of the viewer: the synecdoche of the beholder) [fig. 476].



Fig. 477: Friedrich Herlin, detail of the retablo of the main altar from the Church of Sankt Georg in Nördlingen, 1462, Nördlingen, Stadtmuseum

The readers of small books used framed lenses, described by Alhazen in his *Book of Optics* (c. 1020), Robert Grosseteste in *De iride* (*On the Rainbow*; 1220–1235) and Roger Bacon in the fifth section of *Opus Maius* (c. 1262 – before 1267). But what truly fascinated artists and writers were glasses. They came to Europe in the second half or towards the end of the thirteenth century. They appeared, as a new and fashionable innovation, in many paintings and illuminations from the end of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. The first painted representation of glasses appears in the portrait of Cardinal Hugh de Provence, depicted by Tommaso da Modena, whilst reading in a scriptorium (1352, fresco in the Chapter House of the Basilica di San Niccolò, Treviso). Typically, the apostles in the

scene of the *Dormition of the Virgin* either hold or wear glasses; over forty examples of such compositions date from the end of fourteenth to the first quarter of the sixteenth century, including the first such painting, a panel by Conrad von Soest (1403), and another by the Master of Heiligenkreuz (c. 1400–1410) through a miniature from the *Bedford Book of Hours* (c. 1423–1430), and Van Eyck's *Madonna van der Paele*, to the engraving by Martin Schongauer (c. 1480) and other fifteenth-century examples [fig. 477]. Sainly writers, such as the Evangelists, sometimes wore glasses, as St. Luke does in the miniature *Christ and the Four Evangelists* in the French illuminated codex from c. 1400 (New York, Morgan Library, ms. 331, fol.187r). This bodily prosthesis becomes the attribute of the symbolic body: the sign of intellectual and spiritual activity. At the same time, it never loses its literal meaning. Glasses are always a reference to corporeal bodies – to the physical power of seeing, which the beholder is encouraged to employ to read – even if only imaginatively – the text written or read out loud by the depicted figure.

In the fifteenth century, people perceived glasses as a positive addition, a prosthesis. They were noble and useful, a desirable extension of the body, rather than an index of its physical deformation. The duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, wrote in 1462 to his ambassador in France, to order 36 pairs of glasses, probably as gifts to his nobles because in the letter he stressed that they were not for him (“Thank God, we don’t need them yet”).³⁷³ In his *Letter to Posteriority*, Petrarch complained that since his sixtieth birthday his sight had deteriorated and that he had to use glasses, though he did not regard them as disdainful stigmata of disability.³⁷⁴ Alessandro della Spina, a Dominican friar from Pisa (died 1313), wore glasses “willingly and fondly.”³⁷⁵ In the early fourteenth century, glasses became a standard good, with their production and sale regulated by the guild, according to a Venetian document of 1301.

373 V. Ilardi, “Eyeglasses and Concave Lenses in Fifteenth Century Florence and Milan: New Documents,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 29, 1976, pp. 345–346.

374 V. Ilardi, *Renaissance Vision: From Spectacles to Telescopes*, Philadelphia 2007, p. 61.

375 V. Ilardi, *Renaissance Vision: From Spectacles to Telescopes*, p. 6.



Fig. 478: Jan van Eyck, *The Annunciation*, c. 1435, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.39

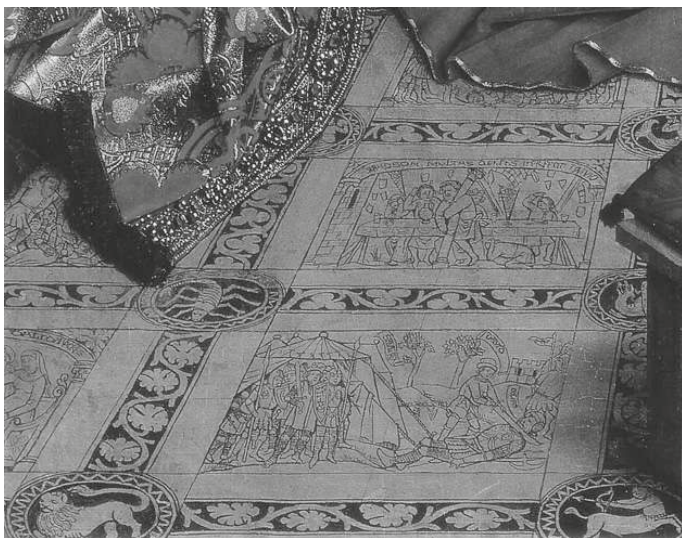


Fig. 479: Jan van Eyck, *The Annunciation*, Washington, detail

Many fifteenth-century paintings and objects – not only those which are very small, but also of an average or even considerable size – required “detailed” visual investigation: looking at their small forms, deciphering their details, tracing their motifs. This mode of viewing was decidedly against the Aristotelian category of perception all at once, cited in the introduction to this chapter, and against the integrity of the composition (*integritas*). Jan van Eyck’s monumental *Ghent Altarpiece* and the large *Madonna van der Paele* invited viewers to decipher – numerous and important– inscriptions [figs. 28, 321, 475].³⁷⁶ The smaller *Miraflores*

376 For the epigraphy of Van Eyck’s paintings see: L. Campbell, *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Schools: National Gallery Catalogues*, London 1998, pp. 214–216 and 222; M. Smeyers, “Jan van Eyck, Archeologist? Reflections on Eyckian Epigraphy,” in: *Archaeological and Historical Aspects of West-European Societies, Album amicorum André van Doorselaer*, (Acta Archeologica Lovaniensia 8), ed. by M. Lodewijckx, Leuven 1996, pp. 403–414; J. Paviot, “Les inscriptions grecques et hébraïques dans les tableaux eyckiens,” *Revue Belge d’Archéologie et d’Histoire de l’Art* 75, 2006, pp. 53–73; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, chapters VI.2.2.2 and IX.2.1. Cf. H.J. Sauermost, “Die Sonntagsseite des Genter Altares oder Pictor

Hubertus Eeyck: maior quo nemo repertus,” *Pantheon* 40, 1982, pp. 290–300; H.H. Mann, “Die Verkündigung der Maria. Anmerkungen zu Jan van Eycks ‘sprechender’ Malerei. Oder zu einem Text, der auf dem Kopf steht,” in: *Regel und Ausnahme. Festschrift für Hans Holländer*, ed. by H.H. Mann et al., Aachen 1995, pp. 143–173. **For the Van der Paele Madonna** see note 369. **On the Ghent Altarpiece:** A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 199–200, 222–226, 670–683 (with previous bibliography). See also: M. De Mey, “The Ghent altarpiece and performative painting,” in: *Kann das Denken malen? Philosophie und Malerei in der Renaissance*, ed. by I. Bocken, T. Borsche, Munich 2010, pp. 73–94; J. Bogaert, *Van Eyck: De Aanbidding van het Lam Gods. Machtsdroom en esoterie*, Oosterzele 2010; L. Bergmans, “Creating as the possess, painting as I can and contemplating with lively attention: An interpretation of the joint venture of Jan van Eyck and the viewers of the Ghent Altarpiece,” in: “*Videre et videri coincidunt.*” *Theorien des Sehens in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by W.Ch. Schneider, Münster 2011, pp. 257–270; A. Châtelet, *Hubert et Jan Van Eyck: créateurs de l’Agneau mystique*, Quétigny 2011; L. Dequeker, *Het mysterie van het Lam Gods. Filips de Goede en de Rechtvaardige Rechters van Van Eyck*, Leuven 2011; H. van der Velden, “The quatrain of ‘The Ghent Altarpiece,’” *Simiolus* 35, 2011, no. 1/2, pp. 5–39; V. Herzner, “A response to Hugo van der Velden, ‘The quatrain of The Ghent Altarpiece,’” *Simiolus* 35, 2011, no. 3/4, pp. 127–130; *Vision & Material: Interaction between Art and Science in Jan van Eyck’s Time*, (conference Brussels 2010), ed. by M. De Mey, M.P.J. Martens, C. Stroo, Brussels 2012, pp. 128–139; B. von Barghahn, *Jan van Eyck and Portugal’s ‘Illustrious Generation,’* chapters. 6–7, pp. 318–466; N.L.W. Streeton, *Perspectives on the Painting Technique of Jan van Eyck: Beyond the Ghent Altarpiece*, London 2013; G. Steyaert, “The Ghent Altarpiece: New thoughts on its original display,” *The Burlington Magazine* 157, 2015, no. 1343, pp. 74–84; *The Ghent Altarpiece: Reproductions, Interpretations, Scholarly Debates*, ed. by S. Kemperdick, J. Rößler, J.C. Heyder, Berlin 2017; *The Ghent Altarpiece – Van Eyck: Art, History, Science and Religion*, ed. by D. Praet, M.P.J. Martens, Veurne 2019; M. Martens, T.-H. Borchert, J. Dumolyn, J. De Smet, F. Van Dam, *Van Eyck*, passim; T.-H. Borchert, *Van Eyck: The Complete Works*, Hong Kong–Cologne–London et al. (Taschen), forthcoming (2021). **On the iconography of the Ghent Altarpiece:** E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting...*, vol. I, chapter VIII, pp. 215–246; C. Gottlieb, “‘En ipse stat post parietem nostrum’: The Symbolism of the Ghent ‘Annunciation,’” *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* 2/4, 1970, pp. 75–98; L. Brand Philip, *The Ghent Altarpiece and the Art of Jan van Eyck*, Princeton 1971; R. Haacke, *Programme zur bildenden Kunst in den Schriften Ruperts von Deutz*, Siegburg 1974, chapter 7; E. Dhanens, *Van Eyck: The Ghent Altarpiece*, London 1973; E. Dhanens, *Hubert en Jan van Eyck*; D. Goodgal, *The Iconography of the Ghent Altarpiece*, dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, University Park 1981; B.G. Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece, Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting*, New York 1984, pp. 109 ff; N. Schneider, *Jan van Eyck*.

Altarpiece and the *Altarpiece of St. John* by Rogier van der Weyden [figs. 30–31] encouraged the beholders to analyze both the inscriptions and the scenes depicted in the painterly imitations of small sculptural groups, located in the archivolts of the illusionistic, tripartite frame.³⁷⁷ In the large *Annunciation* at the National Gallery in Washington [fig. 478] the Virgin's response to the angelic salutation, *Ecce ancilla domini*, is written backwards and upside down (in the *Ghent Altarpiece* the words are also written backwards – fig. 28). Moreover, the viewer has to read the inscriptions on the floor tiles that identify the engraved Old Testament scenes, such as David beheading Goliath and Samson destroying the Philistine temple [fig. 479].

Der Genter Altar. Vorschläge für eine Reform der Kirche, Frankfurt a.M. 1986; W. Wilhelmy, *Der altniederländische Realismus und seine Funktionen: Studien zur kirchlichen Bildpropaganda des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Münster–Hamburg 1993, pp. 68–70; H. Belting, Ch. Kruse, *Die Erfindung des Gemäldes...*, pp. 94–103, cat. no. 18–33; V. Herzner, *Jan van Eyck und der Genter Altar*, Worms 1995; B. Ridderbos, “Bonte pracht of grijze vrijdagmaorgens. De inhoud van de vorm van de Oudnederlandse schilderkunst,” in: *Onverwacht bijeengebracht. Opstellen voor Ed Taverne en Lyckle de Vries*, ed. by J.L. de Jong, E.A. Koster, Groningen 1996, pp. 111–118; H. Schlie, *Bilder des Corpus Christi...*; B. Ridderbos, *Objects and Questions...*, pp. 42–59; P. Schmidt, *Het Lam Gods*, Leuven 2005; K. Schröer, *Das Rätsel des Lammes: der Genter Altar und sein Geheimnis*, Münster 2007; L. Seidel, “Visual Representation as Instructional Text: Jan van Eyck and the Ghent Altarpiece,” in: *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, and Texts, 1400–1800*, ed. by P.H. Smith, B. Schmidt, Chicago 2007, pp. 45–67; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck*, pp. 17–33; B. Ridderbos, “Creating Frameworks: The Social Function of the Ghent Altarpiece,” in: *Vision in Text and Image: The Cultural Turn in the Study of Arts*, ed. by H.W. Hoen, M.G. Kemperdink, Louvain 2008, pp. 33–52; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, chapters VI.2.2.2 and IX.2.1; K. Greub-Fraçz, *Die Grisailen des Genter Altars: Altniederländische Skulpturenimitationen im Kontext des Lettners*, Petersberg 2014; *The Ghent Altarpiece: Reproductions, Interpretations, Scholarly Debates*, ed. by S. Kemperdick, J. Rößler, J.C. Heyder, Berlin 2017; *The Ghent Altarpiece – Van Eyck: Art, History, Science and Religion*, ed. by D. Praet, M.P.J. Martens, Veurne 2019; M. Martens, T.-H. Borchert, J. Dumolyn, J. De Smet, F. Van Dam, *Van Eyck*, passim.

377 *The Miraflores Altarpiece and the Altarpiece of St. John* by Rogier van der Weyden: R. Grosshans, “Rogier van der Weyden. Der Marienaltar aus der Kartause Miraflores,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 23, 1981, pp. 49–112; R. Suckale, *Rogier van der Weyden. Die Johannestafel. Das Bild als stumme Predigt*, Frankfurt a.M. 1995; De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 12; A. Châtelet, *Rogier van der Weyden. Problèmes...*, pp. 88–91; A. Châtelet, *Rogier van*



Fig. 480: Rogier van der Weyden in the workshop of Robert Campin, *Portrait of a Lady*, c. 1435–1440, London, The National Gallery

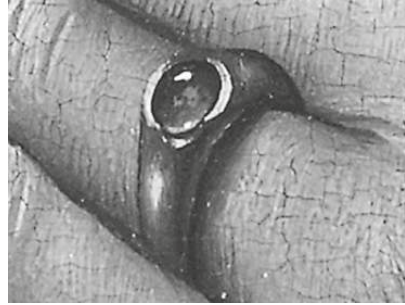


Fig. 481: Rogier van der Weyden in the workshop of Robert Campin, *Portrait of a Lady*, c. 1435–1440, London, The National Gallery – detail

Some elements were truly microscopic, and practically invisible to the naked eye. For instance, it required great determination to discern the image of a bearded man reflected in the red rock of the ring worn by a lady portrayed in the picture from the workshop of the young Rogier van der Weyden, at the National Gallery in London (once attributed to Robert Campin as

der Weyden / Rogier de le Pasture, pp. 37–40; V.S. Reed, “Rogier van der Weyden’s Saint John Triptych for Miraflores and a Reconsideration of Salome,” *Oud Holland* 115, 2001/2002, pp. 1–14; Kemperdick *Rogier* 1999/2007, pp. 36–38; Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, cat. no. 29; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, chapters VI.4.2, VI.4.4 and IX.2.2; L. Campbell et al., *Rogier van der Wyden and the Kingdoms oft he Iberian Peninsula*, exh. cat., Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid 2015, cat. no. 3 (S. Kemperdick) and 15 (P. Silva Maroto); S. Kemperdick, “The Miraflores Triptych and the issue of Rogier van der Weyden’s ‘authenticated’ paintings,” in: *Rogier van der Weyden y España*, ed. by L. Campbell, J.J. Pérez Preciado, Madrid 2016, pp. 30–42; V.S. Reed, “Don’t look now: the turning figure of Perseus and two Renaissance images of decapitation,” *Iconographica* 16, 2017, pp. 164–173.

the Master of Flémalle)³⁷⁸ [fig. 480–481]. The details in some small-scale images, such as the *Madonna in the Church* by Jan van Eyck (1440?, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) [fig. 201], are larger but still require a focused gaze: for instance the stone figures on the pillar of the doors in the side aisle or in the niche of the presbytery, or the reliefs in the gables or wooden statues of the Crucifixion at its top, and lastly the motifs in the stained-glass windows which measure 1.8–2cm. A viewer's sight has to be very strained to see the details of the small *Dresden Triptych* by the same master (1437, h: 33.1cm; Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister)³⁷⁹

378 M. Gutjahr, "Von einem Goldring vom Lutherhaus in Wittenberg zu einem möglichen Selbstbildnis von Robert Campin," *Archäologie in Sachsen-Anhalt* N.F. 5, 2008, pp. 7–12.

379 *The Dresden Triptych* by Jan van Eyck: H. Menz, "Zur Freilegung einer Inschrift auf dem Eyck-Altar der Dresdener Gemäldegalerie," *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden* 1959, pp. 28–29; A. Mayer-Meitschel, *Niederländische Malerei 15. und 16. Jahrhundert, Katalog der Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister*, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden 1966, pp. 28–31; A. Neuner-Warthorst, "Das geopfert Kind. Ikonographie und Programmatik des Dresdner Marienaltars von Jan van Eyck," *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden* 25, 1994/1995 (1998), pp. 31–43; M. Faries, "The underdrawing in Jan van Eyck's Dresden triptych," in: *La peinture dans les Pays-Bas au 16e siècles*, (Le dessin sous-jacent et la technologie dans la peinture, colloque 12, 1997), Leuven 1999, pp. 221–229; G. Zeman, "Eine altniederländische Silberstiftzeichnung und ihre Bedeutung für Jan van Eycks Dresdner Marienaltar," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 65, 2002, pp. 91–104; U. Neidhardt, Ch. Schölzel, "Jan van Eyck's Dresden Triptych," in: *Investigating Jan van Eyck*, pp. 25–39; U. Neidhardt, Ch. Schölzel, "Jan van Eycks Dresdener Marienaltariptychon – Entstehung und Funktion," in: Th. Ketelsen, U. Neidhardt et al., *Das Geheimnis des Jan van Eyck. Die frühen niederländischen Zeichnungen und Gemälde in Dresden*, exh. cat., Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister – Kupferstichkabinett, Munich–Berlin 2005, pp. 14–21, especially pp. 14–15; see also cat. no. 67 (U. Neidhardt); P.L. Heath, "Justice & mercy: The patron of Jan van Eyck's Dresden Triptych," *Apollo* 167, 2008, no. 552, pp. 106–113; N. Streeton, "Jan van Eyck's Dresden triptych: New evidence for the Giustiniani of Genoa in the Borromei ledger for Bruges, 1438," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 3, 2011, no. 1 (on-line); H. Claussen, "Der Dresdner Marienaltar mit dem heiligen Georg und der heiligen Katharina von Jan van Eyck (1437)," in: *Bild und Botschaft. Biblische Geschichten auf Meisterwerken der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden*, Regensburg 2015, pp. 51–63; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 186, 193–195, 670–671 (with full bibliography in footnotes 262 and 279); T.-H. Borchert, "The impact of Jan van Eyck's lost Lomellini Triptych and his Genoese patrons," *Colnaghi studies journal* 04, March 2019, pp. 30–61; M. Martens, T.-H. Borchert, J. Dumolyn, J. De Smet, F. Van Dam, *Van Eyck*, passim.

[fig. 482], such as the images of a pelican and phoenix decorating the throne of the Virgin, or figures of Abraham and Isaac, and David and Goliath. The eyes wander along the meandering decoration of the capitals, or scan the cityscape at the back of the right wing. A further challenge is posed by the coat-of-arms on the frame (one belongs to the Giustiniani family from Genoa, another remains unidentified), and by the inscriptions, particularly the signature on the internal part of the frame, which reads: “Johannes de Eyck me fecit et complevit Anno Domini M CCCC XXX VII.” One has to bring the small triptych closer to the eyes to read with great difficulty the vital words of the Christ Child, inscribed on the scroll held by him: “Discite a me quia mitis sum et humilis corde” (“Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,” Matthew 11:29). The hymn exalting the Virgin, adapted from the office for the Feast of the Assumption, praises her with metaphors of light: claims that she is more beautiful than the sun, brighter than all stars, full of radiance of eternal light, an unblemished mirror reflecting the majesty of God *etc.* run along the external frame of the central panel and the adjoining wings. To read the text one required not only excellent eyesight and patience, but also the physical handling of the object: being able to turn it around to follow the flow of the sentences. Similarly, Van Eyck’s *St. Barbara* (1437, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten)³⁸⁰ [fig. 483] required the viewers to bring the panel close to their eyes, as only then did the details of the wonderful landscape, with the great tower built by stonemasons, become legible. The work had to be carefully scrutinized, to decipher the depicted building process and the construction details of the gigantic edifice (though of course it is proportionately tiny in the painting).

380 *Saint Barbara* by Jan van Eyck: R. Billinge, H. Verougstraete, R. van Schoute, “The Saint Barbara,” in: *Investigating Jan van Eyck*, pp. 41–47; F. Koreny, E. Pokorny, G. Zeman, *Early Netherlandish Drawings from Jan van Eyck to Hieronymus Bosch*, exh. cat. Rubenshuis, Antwerp 2002, cat. no. 5; C.J. Purtle, “Intention and invention in Jan van Eyck’s ‘Saint Barbara,’” in: *Invention: Northern Renaissance Studies...*, pp. 51–63; H. Schlie, “Ein ‘Kunststück’ Jan van Eycks in der Nachfolge der mittelalterlichen Artefakt- und Kunsttheorie,” in: *Konzepte von Produktivität im Wandel vom Mittelalter in die Frühe Neuzeit*, ed. by C. Laude, G. Heß, Berlin 2008, pp. 243–286; T.-H. Borchert, *Jan van Eyck. Grisallas*, cat. no. 2; T.-H. Borchert, *Van Eyck to Dürer...*, cat. no. 18; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 452–454; N. van Hout, *The Unfinished Painting*, Antwerp 2012, no. 34; M. Martens, T.-H. Borchert, J. Dumolyn, J. De Smet, F. Van Dam, *Van Eyck*, passim.

Van Eyck was not the only master working in microscale. A tiny painting of *The Virgin and Child in a Niche* by the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden (14.2 × 10.5cm; Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza) [fig. 202] is an example of the virtuoso technique of painting with microscopic precision, capturing the scenes from the Marian cycle together with details of filigree tracery and accurate imitations of the stone reliefs. There are numerous similar examples of this approach to painting minute details, but those discussed above are among the most representative.



Fig. 482: Jan van Eyck, *Dresden Triptych*, 1437, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister



Fig. 483: Jan van Eyck, *St Barbara*, 1437, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

Gazing at details and reading small or larger inscriptions constituted important components of the experience of fifteenth-century Netherlandish and German paintings. They marked the interaction with the physical corporeality of the works of art, thus validating their specific materiality that visualised the sacred or incarnate divinity. Consequently, they validated the meaning of these objects – the representation of the tenets of Christianity such as the Incarnation, Salvation through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, or the sanctifying role of the Eucharist, with Christ actually present in bread and wine. These are the tenets related to the body: be it the body of the Virgin or the human body of Christ, or His metaphysical body; the body in labour, the tormented body and the “consumed” body. A general way of

looking and seeing would be too abstract. What was at stake was not only the concept but primarily the grounded, sensory perception that enabled the “bodily experience.” Paintings and works of art assisted the viewer in obtaining that goal, but not only as a pure representation of these bodies, but also as the extension of the beholder’s own body. The faithful, through their intense gaze and bringing the object closer to their eyes, experienced the physicality of the Virgin, Christ and the saints. By reading inscriptions the viewers could hear their voices; by closely examining the details of the illusionistically depicted materials they could haptically experience their substance, texture and surface; often, as we saw earlier, the object was meant to be touched. The sense of sight and touch are complementary. It is hardly surprising that the artworks had to reveal their artifice—pointing to their materiality, demonstrating that they are not the sacred, but only the images and not the actual divine or saintly figures themselves: ultimately, that they are *not* identical with their sacred models. Thus, they escaped the accusation of encouraging blasphemous idolatry – the cult of idols and fetishes. This was the reason for including many illusionistic tricks, imitating with paint the stone quality of sculptures, the airiness of tracery, the form of a wooden altar shrine and its architectural setting, and windows or doors opening; confirming thereby the optical boundary between the depicted, sacred scene, and the reality of the viewer’s space.

IV. WORDS AND TEXTS IN ART: THE CULTURE OF READING IN PAINTINGS

IV.1. Reading paintings and viewing books: culture of prayer books and of chronicles

The visual culture of things in the fifteenth century had a dual nature: it was based upon imagination and reading, and upon images and writing.

The foundation of late medieval piety was the creation of mental images that captured the concepts and truths of the faith, and its sacred events. Material representations were justified as long as they reflected their correlated spiritual images, when acting as their visual mediators.³⁸¹ The devotional experience was spiritual, but based on *imagines in mente*, the formation of mental images. It led from the imagining of a saintly figure or sacred events (*visio, imaginatio*), through the contemplation and consideration of the subject matter of that image (*meditatio*), and subsequently, through empathizing with the imagined situation and sharing the fate, experiences and conditions of holy figures (*compassio*). This led on to an emotional and psychological identification with the holy figures (*imitatio*) that resulted in a metaphysical state of contemplation in which the sensation of the lost individual, human condition and full union with the divine or full dissolution in His incomprehensible substance (*contemplatio*) was achieved. Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century texts by the church reformers such as Jean Gerson, Pierre d'Ailly, Nicolas de Clemange or Nicholas of Cusa, and leaders of the *devotio moderna* movement such as Geert Groote, or mystics such as Jan van Ruysbroeck (Ruusbroec) show this. Their teaching was based on the category of seeing and the visionary formation of a mental image: experiencing the sacred in imagined, spiritual visions that affected the senses and the body. The mental image was a way to experience a vision – and paradoxically – a way to free oneself from the earthly images that limited the soul. The material representations recorded the spiritual images, but at the same time they nourished these visions: the formation of ‘pure’ mental images formed during meditation, a kind of silent

381 J.H. Marrow, *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance: A Study of the Transformation of Sacred Metaphor into Descriptive Narrative*, Kortrijk 1979; his, “Symbol and Meaning in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance,” *Simiolus* 16, 1986, pp. 150–169.

contemplative image. According to the *devotio moderna*, as theorized by Geert Groot and Florens Radewijns, the mimetic quality of the material image informed the simple beholder that the fire of ardent faith is ignited by common earthly things, and that spiritual enlightenment happens – and now, but – as confirmed by the veil – it relates to invisible things. Images are hypnotic *phantasmata*, necessary for spiritual enlightenment, but they should not be taken for the actual *visio*. The theologians, reformers and the pioneers of the *devotio moderna* movement all warned against the blasphemous consequences of such a misdirection of faith.

Such piety, according to the noble intentions of the reformers of the Christian faith, served all believers, including the ‘simple folk,’ or ‘idiots’ in the archaic sense of the word: the lay people low down the social scale: illiterate, uneducated, outcasts from the public community of citizens (Greek ιδιώτης, *idiōtēs*). It had to regulate the non-textual popular culture, w , despite the prescriptive writings of the official Church, faith in the power of rituals and the magic of images (sacred paintings) was widespread. Superstitious thinking was common also among the elite, patricians, and even members of the aristocracy.

At the same time, however, the realm of things and works of art was subject to the powerful tradition of writing, which defines the world through description. According to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century concepts (the *cultura animi* of Samuel von Pufendorf, 1688; Johann Gottfried Herder’s *Bildung*, and the writings of Immanuel Kant and Wilhelm von Humboldt), culture is defined by concepts, names, and words, that systematize natural events and divine creations, encompassing all the inventions of the human mind: religion, theology, social institutions, traditions, language, and morality. In the fifteenth century, the concept was not yet coined, but what was later termed culture or civilization was expressed in a literary way, in every kind of writing. Thanks to the written word society had its history (historiography) and its relation to God (theology, homiletics, religious poetry, devotional books *etc.*); even the mysticism that seemingly exists only beyond the word and writing needed description and literary sources (the texts of female and male mystics from thirteenth to fifteenth centuries). The absence of written record eliminated the event from the realm of the public community, and from official, social communication; that is, the norms binding the elite and the governing bodies. The civilization of written history and codified religion sought to dominate or even eliminate the world of oral tradition: tales, stories, myths, informal customs, superstitions, and magic. It is not surprising that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries – following the global spread of writing through the pan-European banking and trade networks developed by wealthy patricians– all these aspects of social life were described and analysed in treatises (handbooks of myths; treatises

and chronicles recording the mythical past of different nations, for instance the myth of Germania or Batavia; treatises about the customs of various tribes and nations; treatises on black and white magic; critical and literary anthologies of proverbs and sayings *etc.*).



Fig. 484: Master of Catherine of Cleves, *Hours of Catherine of Cleves*, c. 1440, New York, The Morgan Library, ms. M.917/945, fols. 1v–2r

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw the development of a visual civilisation that inextricably linked text and image. It is manifested for instance in what Craig Harbison once termed the “prayer-book mentality.”³⁸² In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in lieu of, or besides the traditional collections of prayers for the clergy— the psalter and breviary – books of hours were introduced, which were also dedicated, even predominantly so, to laymen. This turned out to be a cultural revolution of the fifteenth century.³⁸³ The book of hours codified – if not altogether established – a new kind of

382 C. Harbison, “Visions and meditations in Early Flemish painting,” *Simiolus* 15, 1985, pp. 87–118, especially p. 87.

383 P. Harthan, *Books of Hours and Their Owners*, London 1977, 1982 and subsequent editions – includes Books of Hours of: Maréchal Jean de Boucicaut, Giangaleazzo Visconti, Mary of Guelders, Philip the Bold, John the Fearless,

piety based on personal prayer and meditation, practised at home, in private, outside of the liturgical ceremony. The devotion was based on three or four offices, formed of eight prayers corresponding to the liturgical times of the day: Matins, Nocturns, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers (*vesperae*) and Compline. In the *Officium parvum Beatae Virginis Mariae* (The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary), the main hourly prayers were complemented by the *Pater Noster*, the Angelic Salutation, the Hymns of St. Ambrose, antiphons and litanies, and in particular hymns such as *Obsecro te domina sancta Maria, mater Dei* (I beseech thee, my Lady, Holy Mary, Mother of God...) or *O Intemerata* (Oh, Inviolate...); and the *Officium Crucis* or *Passionis* (The Office of the Holy Cross, the Passion) and alternatively the *Officium Sancti Spiritus* (The Office of the Holy Spirit), and lastly the *Officium defunctorum* (The Office for the Dead). Moreover, books of hours typically included in the beginning a calendar and excerpts from the four Gospels, with a selection of psalms between the offices, including the penitentiary psalms, and the litany to All Saints, and at the end the intercessions (*suffragia*) of the saints, and sometimes of the Holy Trinity and of the Virgin.

Andrea Pearson has demonstrated that the origins of this type of prayer were linked to female courtly culture.³⁸⁴ The piety centred on mass and

Philip the Good, Charles the Bold, Mary of Burgundy, Isabella Stuart, Peter II, Margarete de Foix, Anne de Bretagne, Lorenzo de' Medici; J. Backhouse, *Books of Hours*, British Library, London 1985; R.S. Wieck et al., *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*, exh. cat., The Walter Art Gallery, Baltimore, New York 1988; R.S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art.*, exh. cat. *Medieval Bestseller: The Book of Hours*, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York 1997; E. Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers, 1240–1570*, New Haven–London 2006; Ch. Scott-Stokes, *Women's Books of Hours in Medieval England*, Cambridge 2006, reprint Rochester (NY) 2012; V. Reinburg, *French books of hours: Making an archive of prayer, c. 1400–1600*, Cambridge 2012; *Books of Hours reconsidered*, ed. by S. Hindman, J. H. Marrow, London 2013; J.M. Hand, *Women, manuscripts and identity in Northern Europe 1350–1550*, Farnham 2013; C. Dondi, *Printed Books of Hours from Fifteenth-Century Italy: The texts, the books, and the survival of a long-lasting genre*, Florence 2016; J. Oosterman et al., *Ich, Maria von Geldern. Die Herzogin und ihr berühmtes Gebetbuch (1380–1429)*, Zwolle 2018, chapter 'Das Gebetbuch der Maria von Geldern,' pp. 111–177.

384 A.G. Pearson, *Envisioning Gender in Burgundian Devotional Art, 1350–1530: Experience, Authority, Resistance*, (series: Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Aldershot 2005. Cf. J.M. Hand, *Women, manuscripts and identity in Northern Europe 1350–1550*, Farnham 2013; A. Bennett, "Issues of female patronage: French Books of Hours, 1220–1320," in: *Patronage: Power & agency in medieval art*, ed. by C. Hourihane, Princeton 2013, pp. 233–256.

the liturgy was devised by men and oppressively imposed on women, who sought an alternative in the form of devotion structured by the prayer-books. In this way, female believers became the subject, and not the object, of the enacted devotions, whilst they remained excluded from active participation during the official liturgy. Caroline Walker Bynum has suggested that the Office of the Virgin and the meditation on the Incarnation and the Virgin's role in that act enabled women to focus on the human nature of Christ and consequently identify their sex with the Virgin and her motherhood.³⁸⁵ Numerous Books of Hours were commissioned for women—wives of rulers: starting with the Queen of France, Jeanne d'Évreux (1325–1328, New York, Metropolitan Museum, The Cloisters) [figs. 473–474, 486]; Marguerite de Beaujeu (*The Hours of Saint-Omer*, c. 1330, London, British Library); Jeanne de Navarre (c. 1336–1340, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France), and Bonne de Luxembourg (c. 1348/1349, New York, Metropolitan Museum, The Cloisters) [fig. 155], through Mary d'Harcourt, Duchess of Guelders (1415, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, and Berlin, Staatsbibliothek); Yolande of Aragon (*The Hours of Isabella Stuart*, 1417–1418, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, and the *Rohan Hours*, 1431–1433, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France), and Catherine of Cleves (1440, New York, Morgan Library) [fig. 484]; to Margarete de Foix, Duchess of Brittany (c. 1470–1480, London, Victoria and Albert Museum); Mary of Burgundy (c. 1477, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek) [figs. 13, 175, 309], and finally Anne of Brittany, the Queen of France (1500–1508, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France) [figs. 156–157]. Men adopted the format of the Book of Hours to their prayers around 1370–1440, including Jean de Berry, Boucicaut, the marshal of France, the Duke of Bedford, and the Burgundian dukes. They inherited manuscripts from their wives, mothers, aunts and commissioned their further decoration, as suited their needs. The formula of book illumination, with its origins in female piety, was transformed and modified to serve the male ostentation of power.

385 C. Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, California University Press, Berkeley 1984; her, "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39, 1986, pp. 399–439; her, "Formen weiblicher Frömmigkeit im späteren Mittelalter," in: *Krone und Schleier...*, vol. II: *Die Zeit der Orden, 1200–1500*, pp. 118–129; her, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond*, Philadelphia 2007. Cf. M. Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, Oxford 1976, re- editions: 1978, 1982, 2000; E. L'Estrange, *Holy motherhood: Gender, dynasty and visual culture in the later Middle Ages*, Manchester 2008; M. Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary*, London–New York 2009.

This type of reading and prayer, irrespective of the book owner's gender, required the linking of two activities. The reading of the text happened concurrently with the viewing of the illuminations: miniatures, initials, images in the *bas-de-pages*, and the imagining of these spiritual images during meditation. The word that was read and spoken had to be seen. It gained material clarity and the power of spiritual imagination. Therefore, the illumination was not a simple illustration, but rather a way to merge into one the image and the text. The text was read slowly and attentively; the writing solemnly deciphered in between the highly decorative borders, frequently with ornamental initials and other motifs. The meaning of the words required pious concentration, contemplation and meditation, while the often small-scale of these manuscripts forced the reader to focus their sight and attention.

The complex illumination stimulated, or rather enforced, an intensity of gaze. This was engendered through large and small miniatures, images in the incipits and initials, and sometimes in explicits and *conclusiae* (concluding parts of the text); as well as through figurative motifs, ornaments in the borders, marginalia, drolleries and scenes accompanying the texts in the margins, and through images in the lower section of the page (*bas-de-page*) [fig. 485]. Everything must have been observed, scrutinized and spotted, to assist in the interpretation of the specific sections of the book and in drawing general conclusions. The viewer had to determine the absence of the simple, logical link between the image and the main vehicles of meaning *i.e.* the miniature and the text, which was often the case with scenes on the margins or in the *bas-de-pages*. However, one had to think hard before carefully appraising the divergence between the main sense of the image and its text, and of any subsidiary decoration that accompanied it. For instance, women harassing a monk, or monkeys playing with hares, or copulating goats or hogs accompanying the image of the Virgin and Child or the Annunciation informed the understanding of the sacred scene, even if they did not belong to traditional Marian symbolism [fig. 486]. These parts of the illuminations constituted a conscious subversion, the inversion of the world of the sacred. They displayed a section of the world turned upside-down, the world of the futile profane, but they also revealed, upon careful meditation, the physicality of the material world, tainted by temptations and sensory desires, which will be redeemed by Christ, the 'fruit of the Virgin's womb.' They allowed a temporary turning of the attention away from the central to the marginal. They granted a moment of rest from the intensity of prayer and meditation, which might be needed following the realisation that the whole material world, with its real and strange creations, marginal figures, drolleries, eccentricities and peculiarities, somehow belongs to the divine plan of Salvation; this would be followed by a return to contemplative prayer.

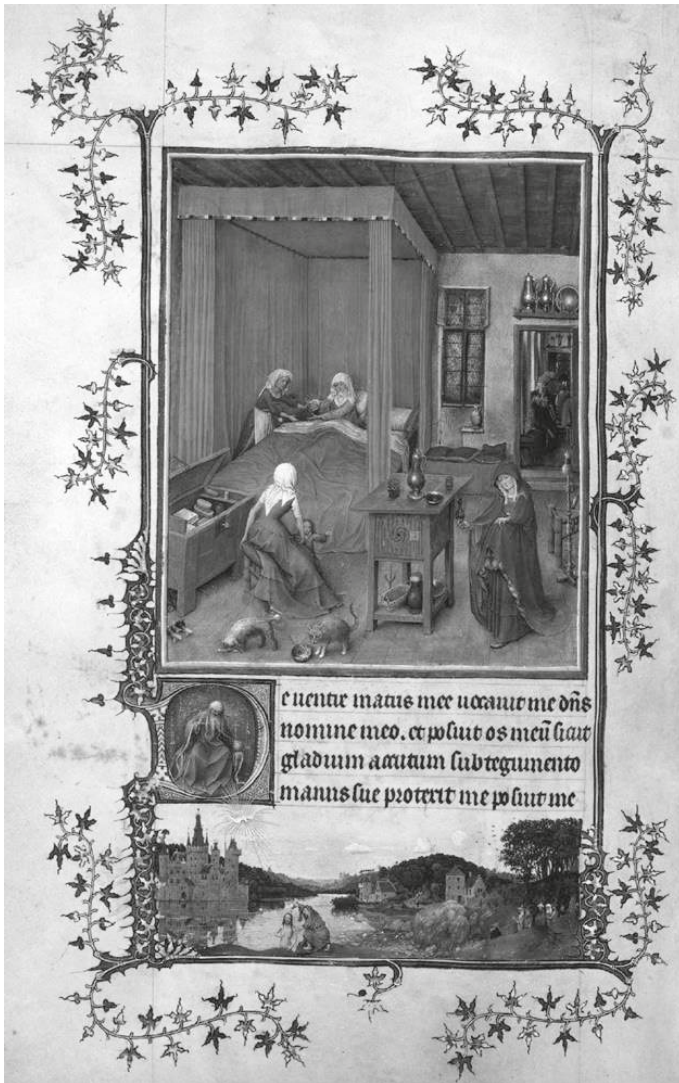


Fig. 485: Workshop of Jan van Eyck, miniature *The Birth of St John the Baptist* and *bas-de-page* with the scene of *The Baptism of Christ* and *God the Father* in incipit D, in the *Turin-Milan Hours*, c. 1435–1440, Turin, Museo Civico, ms. 47, fol. 93v



Fig. 486: Jean Pucelle, *Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, c. 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2, fol. 16r – illumination with the miniature of the *Annunciation*, incipit with the portait of Queen Jeanne d'Évreux, *bas-de-pages* with the scene of a *Woman Tempting the Young Friar*, and borders showing figures of musicians, a monkey and a hare (?)

Today, we would say that the mode of reading and looking was typical of hypertext rather than of continuous prose, or of a linear narrative such as that found in a scroll or a tale read from the beginning to the end. It suited the need of communicating a clear and concise message, the main prayers and miniatures, from which are derived various paths that may be read and observed simultaneously, though of course not all at once. However, it is not like the contemporary hypertext of the Internet, because all the paths are seen concurrently, at a single glance. There are no pockets, pop-outs or flaps. Only the previous and subsequent pages remain invisible, and hidden. Therefore, we read the text sequentially, as in a continuous text, but at the same time there are multiple layers of meaning. On the one hand this mode structures the prayer over the course of the day, but the book is not handled constantly during the day. Rather it is held in hands every three hours, according to the rhythm of the office – each time opened, leafed through to find the right chapter, and then closed after the prayer. The reading is focused on a specific section of the codex, on a detail.

This relationship between text and image in the late medieval manuscript illumination, based on the complementary and equal importance of the two components, lasted a considerably long time, until the balance was threatened by the inventions of the master illuminators from Ghent and Bruges, active in the last quarter of the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries. In 1475–1485, these artists dramatically changed the composition of the miniatures and their borders. They refashioned the page and altered the mode of depiction – the illumination took over the function of the text as a vehicle for communicating the message, depiction and representation [figs. 487–492]. The large, realistically rendered figures, integrated in the landscape or enclosed in an intimate setting, substituted the previous small-scale multifigured groups. They frequently filled the entire space, shown as full- or half-length figures. Thus, the master illuminators adjusted their work to the style of contemporary panel painting. The people in the close foreground are shown as if cropped by the frame, transformed here into lines around the miniature and the border. The page of the manuscript imitates a painting. It is not a coincidence that they frequently contain the form of the painting-window, as if addressing the famous metaphor expressed by Leon Battista Alberti (*De pictura*, 1435), which defined the status of every painting as a window opened to the outside world.

The borders were similarly innovative. Instead of the traditional floral patterns, painted flatly on the white surface of the parchment, new borders no longer functioned just as the ornament depicted against a neutral background. They obtained the status of an autonomous picture: wide, frequently

with its own frame, painted on a coloured background, which pushed forward the figures and objects, thereby constituting a *trompe-l'oeil*, the illusion of real, large-scale human figures, animals, birds or plants depicted naturalistically. The borders have their own space, their own air and separate compositional schemes. They contain full, autonomous *imago*, not the medieval drolleries intertwined in an ornament. The images reflected the existing world outside, through, for instance, the botanical and entomological display of plants and insects. They also implied the fashioning of a new world, suspending above the surface of the page sophisticated constructions made of architectural details, three-dimensional letters and inscriptions, or 'still-lives,' beautifully displayed on shelves. The repertoire of possible border motifs was vast: the *Arma Christi*, pilgrims' badges, small animals, skulls, field and garden plants, shells, and peacocks' tails. In the second decade of the sixteenth century, the border would be framed in the imitation of panel painting.



Fig. 487: Master of James IV of Scotland, illumination with *St. Stephen* and the prayer to him from the *Rothschild Hours*, c. 1510, Christie's New York, Sale 2819, 29.01.2014; formerly Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2844, fols. 218v–219r



Fig. 488: Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian I, page from the *Hastings Hours*, 1483, London, British Library, Add. ms. 54782, fol. 49



Fig. 489: Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, page from the *Houghton Hours* (*Emerson-White Hours*), c. 1480, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University, Houghton Library, ms. Typ. 443/443.1, fol. 171

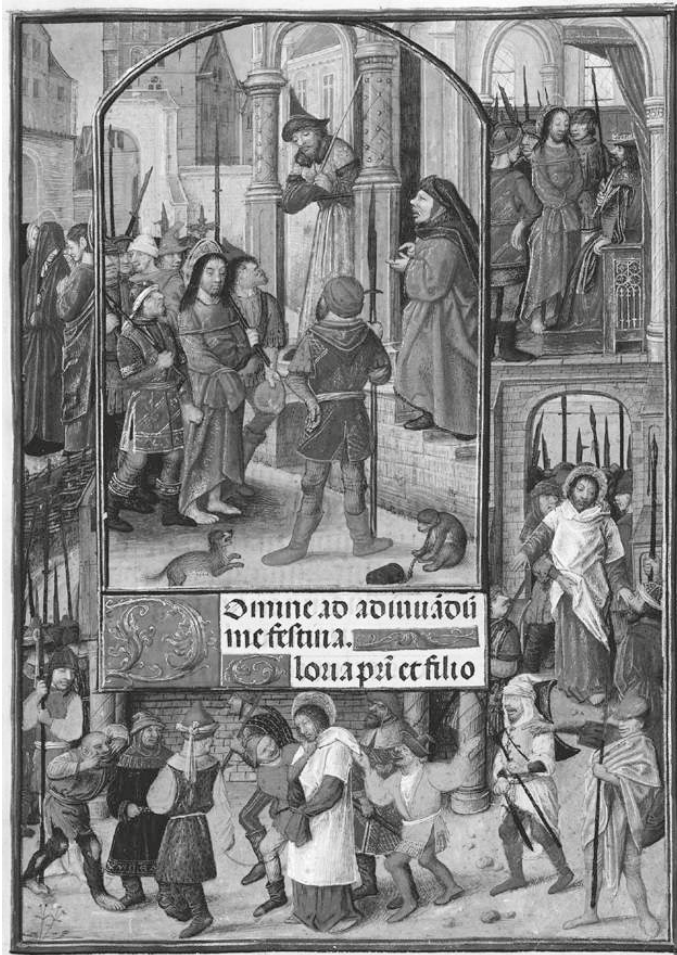


Fig. 490: Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, *Christ before Caiaphas*, page from the *Spinola Hours*, c. 1510–1520, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. Ludwig IX 18, fol. 120



Fig. 491: Master of the Dresden Prayerbook or Master of James IV of Scotland, *The Annunciation*, page from the *Spinola Hours*, c. 1510–1520, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. Ludwig IX 18, fol. 92v

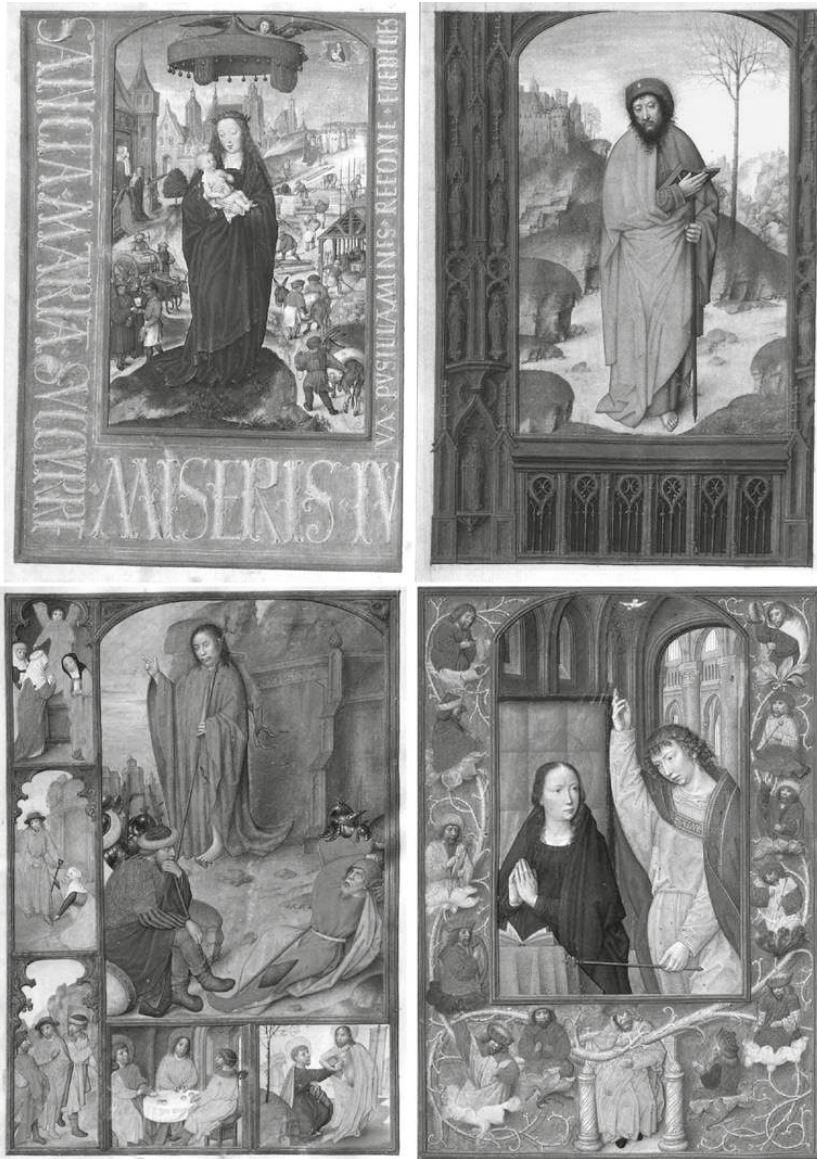


Fig. 492: Simon Bening, illuminations from the *Mayer van den Bergh Breviary*, early 16th c., Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh, inv. no. 618, 501v, 489v, 284v and 427v

The Master of Mary of Burgundy was particularly apt at this type of illumination. He was active between 1469–1483, probably in Ghent for Charles the Bold, and duchesses Mary of Burgundy and Margaret of York.³⁸⁶

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- 386 **The Master of Mary of Burgundy:** O. Pächt, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy*, Oxford 1948; G.I. Lieftinck, “Boekverluchters uit de omgeving van Maria van Bourgondië, c. 1475–c. 1485,” *Verhandlingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Letteren* XXXI/66, Brussels 1969; A. de Schryver, *The Prayer Book of Charles the Bold...*; J.J.G. Alexander, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy: A Book of Hours for Engelbert of Nassau*, New York 1970; A.H. van Buren, “The Master of Mary of Burgundy and his Colleagues: The state of research and questions of method,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* XXXVIII, 1975, pp. 286–309; P.M. de Winter, “A Book of Hours of Queen Isabel la Católica,” *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 67, 1981, pp. 342–427; O. Pächt, U. Jenni, D. Thoss, *Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabel der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Flämische Schule I*, Vienna 1983, pp. 85–103; O. Pächt, D. Thoss, *Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabel der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Flämische Schule II*, Vienna 1990, pp. 69–85, pl. X, figs. 102–150; D. Thoss, *Flämische Buchmalerei. Handschriftenschatze aus dem Burgunderreich*, exh. cat., Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Vienna, Graz 1987; R.G. Calkins, “Sacred Image and Illusion in Late Flemish Manuscripts,” *Essays in Medieval Studies* (Illinois Medieval Association) 6, 1989; J.J.G. Alexander, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy: A Book of Hours for Engelbert of Nassau. The Bodleian Library*, Oxford, New York 1993; E. Inglis, *Hours of Mary of Burgundy: Codex Vindobonensis 1857*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, London 1995; A.H. van Buren, “Master of Mary of Burgundy,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 20, s.v.; G. Clark, *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy: Codex Vindobonensis 1857*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, *Speculum* 72, 1997, 2, pp. 486–487; A. Grebe, “Die Fensterbilder des sogenannten Meisters der Maria von Burgund,” in: *Porträt – Landschaft – Interieur. Jan van Eycks Rolin-Madonna im ästhetischen Kontext*, ed. Ch. Kruse, Tübingen 1999, pp. 257–271; *Bruges à Beaune: Marie, l’héritage de Bourgogne*, exh. cat., Porte de Marie de Bourgogne – Hôtel Dieu, Beaune, ed. by A. Delva, F. Jakubowicz, Paris 2000; E. König, “Zur Wirklichkeit im Fensterbild der Kreuzannagelung des Wiener Stundenbuchs der Maria von Burgund,” in: *Studies in Painting and Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages and Northern Renaissance: Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow*, ed. by J.F. Hamburger, A.S. Korteweg, Turnhout 2006, pp. 271–283; Th. Kren, S. McKendrick et al., *Illuminating the Renaissance...*, pp. 128–157, 227–229; Th. Kren, “A Flemish manuscript in France: The Chantilly Liber Floridus,” in: *Quand la peinture était dans les livres. Mélanges en l’honneur de François Avril à l’occasion de la remise du titre de docteur honoris causa de la Freie Universität Berlin*, ed. by M. Hofmann, C. Zöhl, Turnhout 2007, pp. 128–138; A.H. van Buren, “A window on two duchesses of Burgundy,” in: *Quand la peinture était dans les livres...*, pp. 505–520; B. Rothstein, “The Rule of Metaphor and the Play of the Viewer in the ‘Hours of Mary of Burgundy,’” in: *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late*

His major works included the set of illuminations in the *Hours of Mary of Burgundy* (the miniatures dated c. 1477–1480, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857) [figs. 13, 175], the *Voustre Demeure Hours* (c. 1481, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, vitr. 25–5; and some pages in: Berlin, Staatliche Museen, ms. 78. B. 13; and Philadelphia Museum of Art), and the *Hours of Engelbert van Nassau* (late 1470s, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce mss. 219–220). In his miniatures, the artist merged figurative scenes with illusionistic borders characterised by spatial, architectural forms combined with realistic still-life motifs and ornamental plants. He established the concept of the page of the illuminated manuscript becoming a *trompe-l'oeil*, an illusionistic window opened to a religious scene or an image of the saints. He framed the main scene with a decorative band formed of still-life objects including skulls, amongst other items. His innovations also included the placing of text in illusionistic panels or boards, “suspended” before the miniature, floating in space against the painted background of a biblical narrative or a sequence of figurative scenes. In this way, the painter activated the viewer, implicating his presence before the painting-book. The text that was suspended on the page in a poster-like manner became the intermediary between the image-miniature and the beholder-reader. This process of mediation followed the late medieval rule of personal, private prayer, linking the earthly life of the faithful with the objects of his contemplative adoration, namely godly figures, the saints and the history of Salvation. At the same time, this illusionistic approach transformed the book from being a simple vehicle of religious message to being a work of art. It clarified and presented through the agency of the book the skill and virtuosity of the art itself. Folio 83 v of the Vienna *Hours of Mary of Burgundy* confirms that it was a conscious goal of the makers of these manuscripts to create an artistic object. On the folio, it can be seen that the decoration of the margins was created on an empty page, which means that unlike standard workshop procedure the illuminator worked before the scribe. The skilled text of the manuscript was therefore supposed to complement the artistic, painterly image.

Full-page miniature-painting took over the role of the text as the vehicle of the devotional message being conveyed. Framed in the same manner as the narrative of holy events, it was to stimulate the prayer and meditation. The image became a great, multistage and multivalent narrative. This was a highly significant change, and perhaps even more important than

Medieval and Early Modern Europe, ed. by R.L. Falkenburg, Turnhout 2007, pp. 237–275; E. König, *El libro de horas Voustre Demeure / Il libro d'ore Voustre Demeure / Das Voustre-Demeurs-Stundenbuch*, facsimile edition with a commentary, Valencia 2009; Th. Kren, “De Meester van Maria van Bourgondië,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 278–282.

the transformation of the border into a miniature, which created a unified image, or the concept of the page as the 'window to the outside world'. The text played a secondary role; it retained its importance for the pray-er, but the image became the narrative.

The concepts and innovations of the Master were developed by his contemporaries and later generations of skilled illuminators, such as the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook,³⁸⁷ the Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian I,³⁸⁸ the Master of the Prayerbooks of c. 1500,³⁸⁹ the Master of James IV of Scotland,³⁹⁰ Gerard

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- 387 **Master of the Dresden Prayerbook:** F. Winkler, *Die flämische Buchmalerei des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts. Künstler und Werke von den Brüdern van Eyck bis zu Simon Bening*, Leipzig 1925 (reprint: Amsterdam 1978), pp. 94–101; B. Brinkmann, *Der Meister des Dresdner Gebetbuchs und sein Kreis: Leben und Werk eines burgundischen Buchmalers zwischen Utrecht, Brugge und Amiens*, Berlin 1990; B. Brinkmann, *Die flämische Buchmalerei am Ende des Burgunderreiches. Der Meister des Dresdener Gebetbuchs und die Miniaturisten seiner Zeit*, Turnhout 1997; L. de Kesel, "De Meester van het Gebedenboek van Dresden," in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 409–420.
- 388 **Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian I:** W. Hilger, *Das ältere Gebetbuch Maximilians I*, facsimile edition with commentary, Graz 1973; A.H. van Buren, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy and his colleagues...*; E. Trenkler, *Rothschild Gebetbuch*, facsimile edition with commentary, Graz 1979; P.M. de Winter, *A Book of Hours of Queen Isabel la Católica...*; *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts: Treasures from the British Library*, ed. by Th. Kren, exh. cat., J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu – Pierpont Morgan Library, New York 1983–1984, pp. 21–30; B. Brinkmann, "The Hastings Hours and the Master of 1499," *British Library Journal* XIV, Spring 1988, pp. 90–106; B. Brinkmann, "Master of the Older (First) Prayer Book of Maximilian I," in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 20, s.v.; M.L. Goehring, "Style or Master? A Consideration of the Master of the 'Older' Prayerbook of Maximilian I," in: *Manuscript Studies in the Low Countries: Proceedings of the 'Groninger Codicologendagen' in Friesland, 2002*, Groningen 2008, pp. 187–205; her, "Exploring the Border: the Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal," in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. I, pp. 123–148.
- 389 **Master of the Prayerbooks of c. 1500:** F. Winkler, *Die flämische Buchmalerei...*, pp. 128–129; P. Schatborn, "39 Grisailles in the Book of Hours of Philip the Good in The Hague: An Attribution to the 'Gebetbuchmeister um 1500,'" *Oud-Holland* LXXXV, 1970, pp. 45–48; *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts...*, pp. 49–58; G. Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting of the 15th and 16th Centuries*, Amsterdam 1987, pp. 159–60; D. Thoss, *Flämische Buchmalerei: Handschriftenschätze...*, pp. 107–112; B. Brinkmann, "Master of the Prayerbooks of c. 1500," in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 20, s.v.
- 390 **Master of James IV of Scotland:** F. Winkler, "Neuentdeckte Altniederländer, II: Gerard Horenbout," *Pantheon* 16, 1943, pp. 54–64; L. MacFarlane, "The Book of Hours of James IV and Margaret Tudor," *Innes Revue* XI, 1960, pp. 3–20; A. von Euw, J.M. Plotzek, *Die Handschriften der Sammlung*

Horenbout,³⁹¹ Sanders (Alexander) Bening,³⁹² and lastly Simon Bening³⁹³. The Master of James IV of Scotland (active c. 1500–1530, probably to

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- Ludwig, II, Cologne 1982, pp. 256–285, figs. 387–468; *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts...*, pp. 40–48, 63–8; G. Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting...*, pp. 161–167; F. Unterkircher, *Gebetbuch Jakobs IV von Schottland und seiner Gemahlin Margaret Tudor: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex 1897*, facsimile edition with commentary (Codices Selecti LXXXV), Graz 1987; B. Brinkmann, “Master of James IV of Scotland,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 20, s.v.; M. Krieger, “Zum Frühwerk des ‘Jakobsmeisters,’” *Codices manuscripti* 48/49, 2004, pp. 89–99; her, “Der Meister Jakobs IV. von Schottland, Gerard Horenbout und die Sforza Hours,” *Codices manuscripti* 59, 2007, pp. 13–34; her, *Gerard Horenbout und der Meister Jakobs IV. von Schottland. Stilkritische Überlegungen zur flämischen Buchmalerei*, Vienna–Cologne–Weimar 2012.
- 391 **Gerard Horenbout**: F. Winkler, *Neuentdeckte Altniederländer II...*; P. Wescher, “Sanders and Simon Bening and Gerard Horenbout,” *Art Quarterly* IX, 1946, pp. 190–211; P. Wescher, “Beiträge zu Sanders und Simon Bening und Gerard Horenbout,” in: *Festschrift Friedrich Winkler*, Berlin 1959, pp. 126–135; A. Grote, *Breviarium Grimani*, facsimile edition with commentary, Berlin 1973; *Gent: Duizend jaar kunst en cultuur*, exh. cat., Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent 1975, pp. 190–191, 198–200; A. von Euw, J.M. Plotzek, *Die Handschriften der Sammlung Ludwig*, vol. II, pp. 256–285, figs 387–468; *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts: Treasures from the British Library*, pp. 8–9, 63–68, 113–122; G. Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting...*, pp. 161–7; R. de Maio (ed.), *Codice Flora: Una pinacoteca miniata della Biblioteca nazionale di Napoli*, Napoli 1992; M.L. Evans, *The Sforza Hours. Add. Ms. 34294 of the British Library London*, facsimile edition with commentary, 4 vols, Luzern 1993–1995; B. Brinkmann, “Grimani Breviary and Horenbout, Gerard,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, vols 13 and 14, s.vv.; R. G. Calkins, “Gerard Horenbout and his Associates: Illuminating Activities in Ghent, 1480–1521,” in: *In Detail: New studies of Northern Renaissance art in honor of Walter S. Gibson*, ed. by L.S. Dixon, Turnhout 1998, pp. 49–68; M. Salmi, G.L. Mellini, *The Grimani Breviary*, facsimile edition with commentary, New York 2007; A. Mazzucchi, *Breviario Grimani (ms. Lat. I 99 = 2138, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia)*, facsimile edition with commentary, Rome 2009; M. Krieger, *Gerard Horenbout und der Meister Jakobs IV. von Schottland...*
- 392 **Sanders (Alexander) Bening**: F. Winkler, “Neuentdeckte Altniederländer, I: Sanders Bening,” *Pantheon* 15, 1942, pp. 261–271; A. Hagopian van Buren, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy and his Colleagues...*
- 393 **Simon Bening**: A.W. Biermann, “Die Miniaturenhandschriften des Kardinals Albrecht von Brandenburg (1514–1545),” *Aachener Kunstblätter* XLVI, 1975, pp. 15–310; O. Pächt, “Die niederländischen Stundenbücher des Lord Hastings,” in: *Litterae textuales: Miniatures, Scripts, Collections. Essays Presented to G. I. Lieftinck*, Amsterdam 1976, pp. 28–32; M. Kupfer-Tarasulo, “A Rosary Psalter Illuminated by Simon Bening,” *Quaerendo* IX, 1979, pp. 209–226; M. Kupfer-Tarasulo, “Innovation and Copy in the Stein Quadriptych of Simon Bening,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* XLII, 1979, pp. 274–298; P. de Winter, *A Book of*

be identified with Gerard Horenbout) introduced a nearly symmetrical “layout” on pages opening important chapters of the text: on the *verso* (on the left page) there is a typical full-page miniature, which is echoed on the *recto* by a large miniature added above the text, limited to the two or three lines. In the *Spinola Hours* (c. 1510–1520, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. 83), the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook went even further: he distributed the brief text evenly on both sides, *verso* and

Hours of Queen Isabel la Católica; A. von Euw, J.M. Plotzek, *Die Handschriften der Sammlung Ludwig*, vol. II, pp. 286–313, figs 469–542; *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts...*, pp. 3–12, 21–30, 69–85; J.H. Marrow, “Simon Bening in 1521: A group of dated miniatures,” in: *Liber Amicorum Herman Liebaers*, Brussels 1984, pp. 537–559; J. Testa, “The Beatty Rosarium: A manuscript with miniatures by Simon Bening,” in: *Studies and Facsimiles of Netherlandish Illuminated Manuscripts*, Doornspijk 1986, vol. I; G. Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting...*, pp. 171–177; Th. Kren, J. Rathofer, *Simon Bening: Flämischer Kalender*, (commentary to the facsimile codex Clm. 23638, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich), Luzern 1988; E. Leesti, “A depiction of Saint Sebald of Nuremberg by Simon Bening,” *Oud-Holland* CV/2, 1991, pp. 116–126; J. Testa, “Fragments of a Spanish Prayerbook with Miniatures by Simon Bening,” in: *Oud-Holland* CV/2, 1991, pp. 89–115; A. Marinovic, “Simon Bening, Meister Kostbarer Illuminationen,” *Kunst & Antike* 6, 1993, pp. 6–7; J. Testa, “An Unpublished Manuscript by Simon Bening,” *Burlington Magazine* CXXXVI, July 1994, pp. 416–426; J. Testa, “A Book of Hours with ‘micro-miniatures’ by Simon Bening,” *Oud-Holland* CX/1, 1996, pp. 1–11; B. Brinkmann, “Bening, Simon,” in: *Dictionary of Art*, vol. 3, s.v.; J.A. Testa, “Simon Bening and the Italian High Renaissance: Some unexplored sources,” *Oud-Holland* 114, 2000, pp. 107–124; M.W. Ainsworth, “Was Simon Bening a panel painter?,” in: “*Als ich can*”: *Liber amicorum...*, vol. I, pp. 1–25; I. Andreoli, “Simon Bening: l’ultimo innovatore,” *Alumina* 2, 2004, no. 6, pp. 14–21; Th. Kren, “Simon Bening, Juan Luis Vives, and the observation of nature,” in: *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow*, ed. by J. F. Hamburger, A. S. Korteweg, London 2006, pp. 311–322; J.A. Testa, “Simon Bening Studies Raphael: The impact of the Italian high Renaissance on a Flemish miniaturist,” in: *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow*, pp. 495–504; M. Salmi, G.L. Mellini, *The Grimani Breviary*, facsimile edition with commentary, New York 2007; J.H. Marrow, *Das Stundenbuch der Doña Isabel / The Book of Hours of Doña Isabel / Le livre d’heures de Doña Isabel*, Cologne 2008; A. Mazzucchi, *Breviario Grimani (ms. Lat. 199 = 2138, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia)*, facsimile edition with commentary, Rome 2009; G. Malafarina, “L’apogeo della miniatura: le Ore Da Costa,” *Alumina* 8, 2010, no. 29, pp. 36–43; G.T. Clark, *Da Costa-Stundenbuch*, facsimile edition with commentary, Graz 2010; G. Bertolotti, “Painting materials in sixteenth-century Flemish illumination, with a focus on the use of copper sulphates: Simon Bening as a case study,” in: *Manuscripts in the making: Art & science*, ed. by S. Panayotova, P. Ricciardi, 2 vols., London – Turnhout 2017–2018, vol. 2, pp. 119–131; D. Espada Custódio, “The so-called Book of Hours said to belong to Prince Ferdinand or Queen Catherine, and its

recto, and incorporated it into large miniatures as illusionistic panels, *cartellina*, scrolls or sheets, which also absorbed the borders. Where we can discern the borders, they are no longer an independent decoration of the page, but rather, divided by a fine line, continue or complement the space and the narrative of the main scene. It is evidence of the new way of thinking about the manuscript as a set of illusionistic, ‘quasi-panel paintings’ that was initiated by the Master of Mary of Burgundy. In turn, the miniatures by Simon Bening (1483?–1561) become independent paintings, or even small panel pictures through the substitution of the old-fashioned floral border with various fictive frames that encompass the ‘real’ image (for instance, *The Mayer van den Bergh Breviary*, Antwerp, Museum Mayer van der Bergh, inv. no. 618³⁹⁴).

Before these dramatic changes took place, the beholders followed the traditional mode of reading and viewing in which the text and the image were complementary. The faithful had to read the text, then look at the miniature, then reread the text, observe the painted initials, and again follow the words, sometimes glancing at the margins or the bottom of the page. Every time they did so, they turned their attention from the entirety of the composition to its composite parts; this means focusing on the block of text, but at the same time directing the gaze to motifs accompanying it. The process was characterised by a careful examination of the images, and diligent reading of the text.

relationship with the ‘Grimani Breviary’ and the ‘Très riches heures du Duc de Berry,’” in: *Medieval Europe in motion*, ed. by A. Miguélez Caverio, F. Villaseñor Sebastián Madrid 2018, pp. 127–136; N. García Pérez, “Gender, representation and power: female patronage of Netherlandish art in Renaissance Spain,” in: *Netherlandish art and luxury goods in Renaissance Spain*, ed. by D. van Heesch, R. Janssen, J. van der Stock, New York 2018, pp. 181–200.

- 394 B. Dekeyzer, *Layers of Illusion: The Mayer van den Bergh Breviary*, Ghent 2004. See also: B. Dekeyzer, P. Vandenabeele, L. Moens, B. Cardon, “The Mayer van den Bergh Breviary (Ghent-Bruges, Early 16th Century): Hands and Pigments,” in: *La peinture dans les Pays-Bas au 16e siècle. Pratiques d’atelier. Infrarouges et autres méthodes d’investigation*, ed. by H. Verougstraete, R. Van Schoute. (Le Dessin Sous-Jacent et de la Technologie dans la Peinture, Colloque XII, Leuven, 1997), Leuven 1999, pp. 303–316.



Fig. 493: Master of Mansel, *History of Jason*, illumination from the codex of Jean Mansel, *La Fleur des histoires*, c. 1450–1455, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms 9231, fol. 109v, I 224

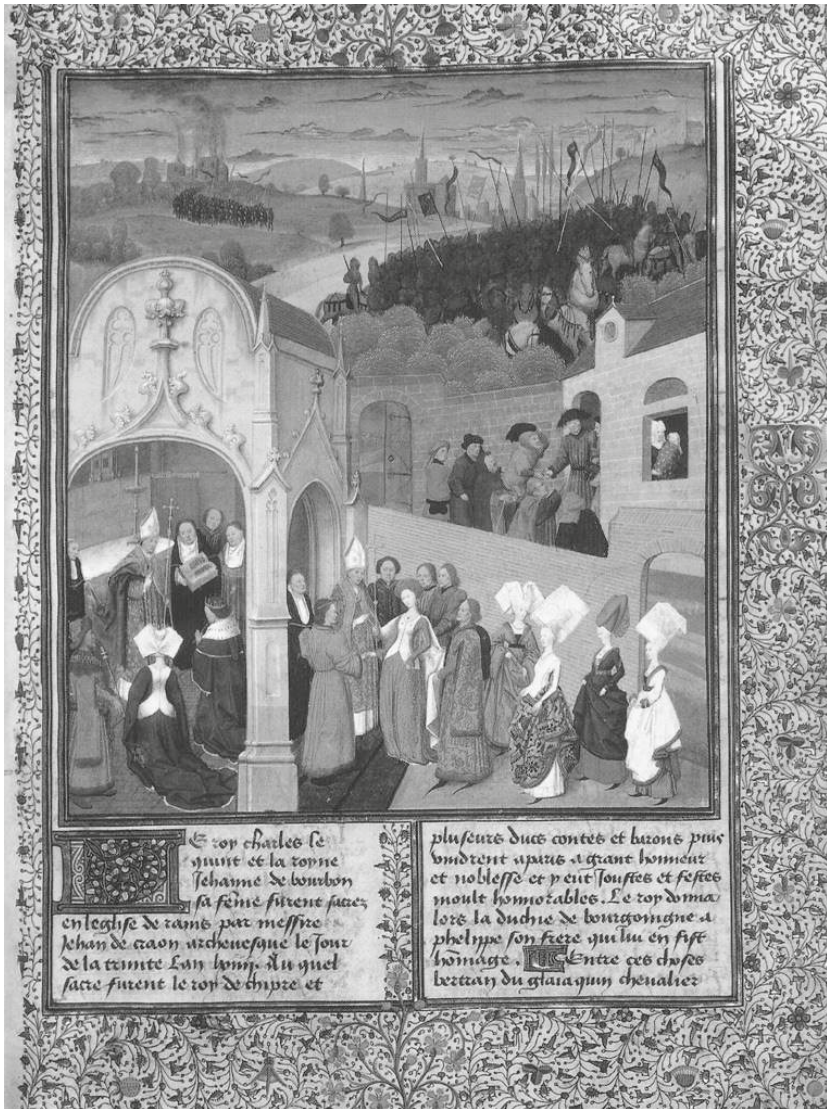


Fig. 494: Simon Marmion, *Scenes from the Life of Charles V*, illumination from the codex of Jean Mansel, *La Fleur des histoires*, second volume, c. 1455 or 1459–1463, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9232, fol. 423r, I 877

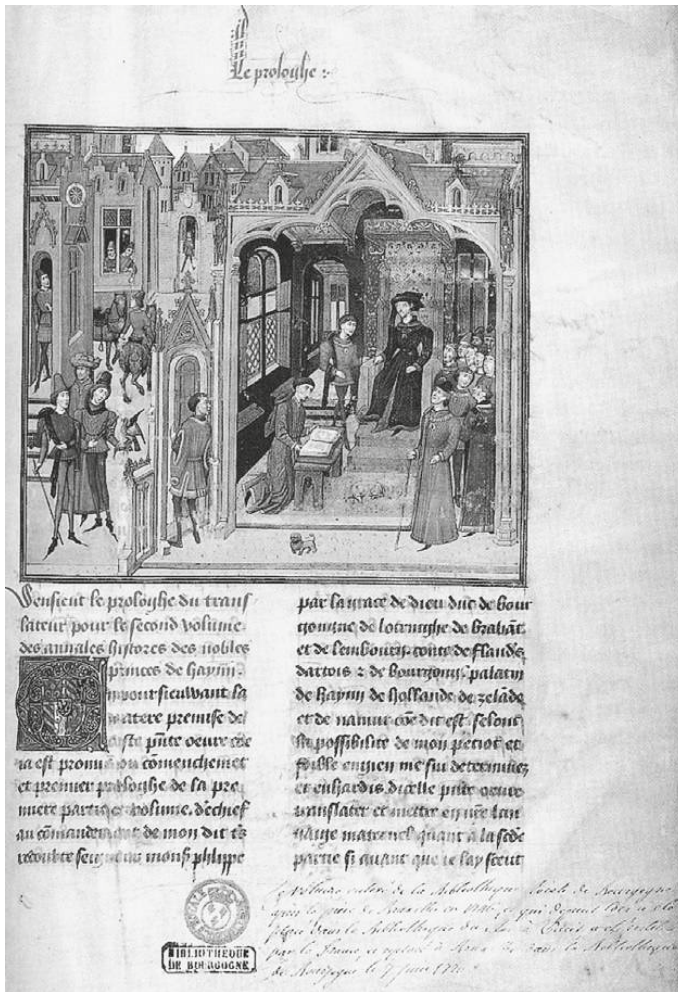


Fig. 495: Willem Vrelant, illumination from *Chroniques de Hainaut*, second volume, before 1468, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9243

However, fifteenth-century illuminated manuscripts could have also been read according to a different logic. Chronicles, history books, and epic poems celebrating the deeds of knights and novels followed the rule of narrative images paired with continuous text. The illustrations in these books are simply miniatures framed with an ornamental border, without accompanying elements such as *bas-de-pages*, or figural decoration in the margins [figs. 493–495]. The images follow the narrative, but they are sometimes embedded in a part of the text that does not correspond directly to the moment depicted. The images therefore create another narrative, parallel to the story described in the text.

Many of these books formulated a narrative about the formation of the state and served as political propaganda for the Burgundian dukes, in particular for John the Fearless, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold.³⁹⁵ Other elements of courtly splendour such as feasts and monumental tapestries reinforced the message conveyed by literary sources. The propaganda role of fifteenth-century books is clearly reflected in the statistics available. Geneviève Hasenohr has showed that in the period from the beginning of the ducal reign of John the Fearless to the Philip the Good's death, *i.e.* from 1404 to 1467, the number of biblical and liturgical manuscripts in the ducal library dropped from fifty to sixteen percent in total, whilst the number of *chansons de geste* and courtly epic poems increased from nine to

395 **Burgundian history codices and their political message:** C. Stroo, "Burgondische presentatietafereelen. Boeken en politiek ten tijde van Filips de Goede en Karel de Stoute," in: *Boeken in de late middeleeuwen*, ed. J. Hermans, K. van der Hoek, Groningen 1994, pp. 285–298; D. Thoss, "'Les trahisons de France'. Text und Bild im französisch-burgundischen Konflikt (1407–1477)," *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 46/47, 1993/1994, pp. 757–761; A.H. van Buren, "Philip the Good's Manuscripts as Documents of his Relations with the Empire," *Publications du Centre Européen des Études Bourguignonnes* 36, 1996, pp. 46–69; A.H. van Buren, "La Toison d'Or dans les manuscrits de Philippe le Bon," in: *L'ordre de la Toison d'Or...*, pp. 189–193; D. Vanwijnsberghe, "La plus riche et noble librairie du monde," in: "Le faste des ducs de Bourgogne," *Dossier de l'art* 44, Déc. 1997–Janv. 1998, pp. 64–79, on pp. 71–72; P. Cockshaw, Ch. van den Bergen-Pantens. *Les Chroniques de Hainaut ou les ambitions d'un prince bourguignon*, Turnhout 2000; T. van Hemelryck, "Les figures exemplaires au secours du héros bourguignon: exemples de chroniqueurs," in: *Le héros bourguignon: histoire et épopée*, (Colloquium Edinburg–Glasgow 2001), Publications du Centre Européen des Études Bourguignonnes 41, 2001, pp. 39–51; R. Devereaux, "Reconstructing Byzantine Constantinople: Intercession and illumination at the court of Philippe le Bon," *French Studies* 59 (3), 2005, pp. 297–314; H.W. Wijsman, *Luxury Bound: Illustrated Manuscript Production and Noble and Princely Book Ownership in the Burgundian Netherlands (1400–1550)*, Turnhout 2010; *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, (in particular P. Schandel, *Opdrachtschènes aan het hof van de Bourgondische hertogen. Bronnen en intenties van een genre*, pp. 66–80; M. Pastoureau, *Wapens, Spreuken, Emblemen. Herladische gewoonten en motieven in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden en aan het Bourgondisch hof in de 15^{de} eeuw*, pp. 89–102). See also in: *La librairie des ducs de Bourgogne. Manuscrits conservés à la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, vol. II: *Textes didactiques*, ed. B. Boussmanne, F. Johan, C. van Hoorbeeck, Turnhout–Brussels 2003; vol. III: *Textes littéraires*, eds B. Boussmanne, T. van Hemelryck, C. van Hoorbeeck, Turnhout–Brussels 2006; vol. IV: *Textes historiques*, ed. by B. Boussmanne, T. van Hemelryck, C. van Hoorbeeck, Turnhout–Brussels 2009.

twenty-two percent, with the quantity of historical books doubling, from nine to eighteen percent.³⁹⁶ Epic historical narratives best served the political agenda of the dukes.

The famous illuminated manuscripts of Philip the Good belonged to this category. The *Chronicles of Hainaut* by Jacques de Guise, translated into French by Jean Wauquelin (*Chroniques de Hainaut*; commissioned in 1446, with volume I executed in 1448–1453, and the subsequent two volumes before 1468; Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9242–9244) [figs. 141–142, 495],³⁹⁷ describe through words and images the story of the newly conquered territory of the Burgundian state, and trace the genealogy back to the ancient Trojans, through the Counts of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland to King Philip the Good himself. The history of *Girart de Roussillon* (c. 1448–1450, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2549)³⁹⁸ was the “national” epic of the Burgundian dynasty, which described the legendary, ninth-century, first duke of Burgundy. The narrative highlighted the links between him and Philip, such as the fact that they both renounced their feudal lords, the French kings: Charles the Bold and Charles VII (through the treatise of Arras 1435). The four volumes of *The Chronicles and Conquests of Charlemagne* by David Aubert (*Conquestes et cronicques de Charlemaine*, 1458–1460, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9066–9068)³⁹⁹ describe the foundation of Franconia, understood as the origins of the French state, unequivocally expressing the claims of the Burgundian dukes to the heirloom of the great emperor. The similarly monumental four volumes of the *History of Charles Martel* (*Histoire de Charles Martel*, written in 1463–1465, and illuminated in 1467–1472, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 6–9),⁴⁰⁰ which describe the ancient French monarchs, the

396 Qtd. after: D. Vanwijnsberghe, *La plus riche et noble librairie...*, p. 68.

397 See note 69.

398 M. Thomas, M. Zink, *Girart de Roussillon ou l'épopée de Bourgogne. Le manuscrit de Vienne, Codex 2549*, Paris 1990; G. Clark, “De Meester van de Girart de Roussillon (Dreux Jehan),” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, pp. 188–191.

399 G. Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting...*, pp. 70–76. E. Verroken, “De verlichter Jacob de Tavernier (1428–1454) en zijn zoon, de bekende miniaturist Jan de Tavernier,” *Handelingen van de Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring van Oudenaarde* 43, 2006, pp. 65–124; *La librairie des ducs de Bourgogne...*, vol. IV, pp. 127–158; *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, cat. nos. 39–40.

400 V. Naudet, “Une compilation de David Aubert: Les ‘Histoires de Charles Martel,’” in: *Les manuscrits de David Aubert ‘descriptvain’ bourguignon*, ed. D. Quéruel, Paris 1999, pp. 69–79; *La librairie des ducs de Bourgogne...*, vol. III, pp. 436–462; *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, cat. no. 61.

Carolingian dynasty, seems to validate the Burgundian dukes' claims to independent power as their descendants; the story includes a new version of the legend of Girart of Roussillon and his conflict with the king. The *Chronicles of Jerusalem* (*Chroniques de Jérusalem abrégées*, c. 1453–1454, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2533)⁴⁰¹ narrate the story of the first crusade and the genealogy of the kings of Jerusalem. This focus testifies to the global political interests of the Duke, who, after the fall of Constantinople (1453) and in the view of the new, great crusade (1454), aspired to the role of leader of Christian knighthood in the fight against the Turks, and the role of the new king of Jerusalem. The idea of a new, great crusade informed the numerous manuscripts about the Order of the Golden Fleece and the history of Jason and Gideon. *La Fleur des histoires* by Jean Mansel (written in 1446–1447, illuminated c. 1450–1458; Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, mss. 9231–9232)⁴⁰² includes the story of Jason, and *Avis pour faire Le passage d'Outre-Mer* describes, for instance, *Voyage en la terre d'Outre-mer*: the report of Bertrandon de la Broquière regarding his travels to Muslim countries in 1432–1433 (c. 1458, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 9087).⁴⁰³ The *Privileges of Ghent and Flanders* (*Privilèges de Gand et de Flandre*; 1453–1454, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2583)⁴⁰⁴ demonstrated the subordination of Flemish cities, including recalcitrant Ghent, to the Ducal administration; it demonstrated the triumphant suppression of the revolt and proclaimed centralized power. It was commissioned after the ducal victory over the rebellious city in the Battle of Gavere in 1453.

The commissions of Charles the Bold and the manuscripts created as gifts for him also included historiographic narratives, such as the *Livre des fais d'Alexandre le grant* by Quintus Curtius Rufus, translated by Vasco da Lucena (1468–1470, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr.

401 L.M.J. Delaissé, *La miniature flamande. Le mécénat de Philippe le Bon / De vlaamse miniatuur. Het mecenat van Filips de Goede*, cat. no. Palais des Beaux-Arts / Paleis van Schone Kunsten, Bruxelles/Brussel 1959, pp. 143–143, cat. no. 175; O. Pächt, U. Jenni, D. Thoss, *Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabel der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: Flämische Schule I*, p. 76; *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, pp. 188–191 and 220.

402 M. Gil, L. Nys, *Saint-Omer gothique. Les arts figuratifs à Saint-Omer à la fin du Moyen Âge 1250–1550: peinture, vitrail, sculpture, arts du livre*, Valenciennes 2004, pp. 168–175; M. Gil, “De Manselmeester,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, pp. 389–393, cat. no. 109–110.

403 *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, cat. no. 37.

404 G.Th. Clark, *Made in Flanders: The Master of the Ghent Privileges and Manuscript Painting in the Southern Netherlands in the Time of Philip the Good*, Turnhout 2000; *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 183–185.

22547) – the history of Alexander the Great, which was also an epic poem about knightly deeds, with illuminations by Loyset Liédet and his followers.⁴⁰⁵ They had also a historic and didactic function: for instance, the most spectacular undertaking of Charles when it comes to the book commissions – planned as six volumes, and executed in three parts as *Histoire de la Toison d'or* (The History of the Golden Fleece) by Guillaume Fillastre (1468–1473, Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, ms. 2; Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, ms. Thott 465 2°; the frontispice: Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms. 2948; two loose sheets: Épinal, Musée de l'Image, inv. no. 343–344).⁴⁰⁶ The stepbrother of Charles the Bold, Anthony, the Bastard of Burgundy (1421–1504), had at least forty-five codices in his castle La Roche-en-Ardenne, including at least thirty illuminated manuscripts, and four volumes of *Les Chroniques de France* by Froissart. He employed great illuminators such as the Master of Anthony of Burgundy and Loyset Liédet.⁴⁰⁷ Lodewijk van Gruuthuse (1422–1492) had an immense library, with nearly two hundred manuscripts, predominantly historic books, epics, and *chansons de gestes* executed in the top southern-Netherlandish workshops, including those of Lieven van Lathem, Loyset Liédet, Philippe de

405 A. de Schryver, “Prix de l'enluminure et codicologie: Le Point comme unité de calcul de l'enlumineur dans ‘Le Songe du viel pellerin’ et ‘Les Faictz et gestes d'Alexandre,’” in: *Miscellanea Codicologica F. Masai MCMLXXIX*, ed. P. Cockshaw, M.-C. Garand, P. Jodogne, Ghent 1979, vol. 2, pp. 469–479; S. McKendrick, “Illustrated Manuscripts of Vasco da Lucena’s Translation of Curtius’s *Historiae Alexandri Magni*: Nature Corrupted by Fortune?,” in: *Medieval Manuscripts of the Latin Classics: Production and Use. Proceedings of the Seminar in the History of the Book to 1500*, Leiden 1993, Los Altos Hills 1996, pp. 131–149; Th. Kren, S. McKendrick et al., *Illuminating the Renaissance...*, pp. 227–229, no. 54; Th. Kren, *A Flemish manuscript in France: The Chantilly Liber Floridus*, pp. 132–137; *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, cat. no. 65.

406 I. Hans-Collas, P. Schnadel, *Manuscrits enluminés des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux*, vol. I: *Manuscrits de Louis de Bruges*, Bibliothèque National de France, Paris 2009, pp. 157–163; I. Hans-Collas, “De Meester van het Gulden Vlies van Wenen en Kopenhagen,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, pp. 378–381.

407 A. Boinet, “Un bibliophile du XV^e siècle: Le Grand Bâtard de Bourgogne,” *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* LXVII, 1906, pp. 255–269; A.M. Menschaert, *Verluchte handschriften gemaakt in opdracht van Antoon, de Grote Bastaard van Bourgondië*, dissertation Universiteit of Gent 1971; Ch. van den Bergen-Pantens, “Héraldique et bibliophilie: le cas d'Antoine, Grand Bâtard de Bourgogne (1421–1504),” in: *Miscellanea Martin Wittek. Album de codicologie et de paléographie offert à Martin Wittek*, Leuven–Paris 1993, pp. 323–353; Th. Kren, S. McKendrick et al., *Illuminating the Renaissance...*, p. 69 and passim.

Mazerolles, the Master of Anthony of Burgundy, the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, and the Bruges Master of 1482.⁴⁰⁸

The makers of the books for Philip the Good and Charles the Bold established a new type of manuscript.⁴⁰⁹ These codices have large or monumental formats, very different to the traditional size of books of hours or prayer books. Written in diligent calligraphy from c. 1440 – the so-called Burgundian (*bâtarde bourguignonne*), combined the classical gothic script, both monumental and festive, and which continued to be used in liturgical texts, with a more ordinary cursive style. The skilled Netherlandish ducal scribes included Jean Wauquelin, Jacquemart Pilavaine, Jean Miélot, and David Aubert, among others. The decoration of the manuscripts form an independent *style bourguignon*, distinct from the illuminations of the earlier period of the Limburgian era (the so-called *période pre-Eyckienne*), and also from the future illusionistic formula of the Bruges and Ghent school after 1475. These large scale illuminations, painted directly onto the parchment using white ground, with a great sense of realism and a convincing treatment of space and volume, are encompassed by a narrow gold, metallic frame. A second frame, sometimes with ornamental decoration, surrounds the body of text, dividing it from the wide border, which is filled with dense, intertwined floral motifs, with acanthus leaves and coats-of-arms.

Artists that were responsible for the large illustrated narratives included: the Master of Girart de Roussillon, frequently identified with Dreux Jehan⁴¹⁰ (*Roman de Girart de Roussillon*, after 1448, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2549); the first volume of *The Chronicles of Hainaut*, 1448, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9242; *Roman d’Alexandre*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 9342; *The Chronicles of Jerusalem*, after 1455, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2533; *The Discovery and Translation of the Body of Saint Anthony*, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. Ludwig

408 C. Lemaire, “De bibliotheek van Lodewijk van Gruuthuse,” in: *Vlaamse kunst op perkament*, exh. cat. Gruuthusemuseum, Brugge 1981, pp. 207–229; *Lodewijk van Gruuthuse. Mecenas en Europees diplomaat ca. 1427–1492*, ed. by M.P.J. Martens, exh. cat. Gruuthusemuseum, Brugge 1992 (in particular: M.P.J. Martens, *Miniaturisten in dienst van Lodewijk van Gruuthuse*, pp. 137–147); I. Hans-Collas, P. Schnadel, *Manuscrits enluminés des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux*, vol. I: *Manuscrits de Louis de Bruges*, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris 2009.

409 *Vlamse miniaturen 1404–1482...*, passim.

410 See: G. Clark, “De Meester van de Girart de Roussillon (Dreux Jehan),” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 188–191.

XI 8), and Jean Le Tavernier⁴¹¹ (*The Chronicles and Conquests of David Aubert – Conquestes et croniques de Charlemaïne*, 1458–1460, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, mss. 9066–9068; *Avis pour faire le passage d’outremer*, Bertrandon de la Broquière – both transcribed by Jean Miélot, 1455, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9095); the Master of Jean Mansel⁴¹² and Simon Marmion⁴¹³ – the illuminators of the *Fleur des histoires* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, mss. 9231–9232; copy in Vienna, Schottenkirche, Stiftsgalerie, mss. 167/139–168/140) – a compilation of various chronicles and historiographic texts, written before 1446 or between 1446 and 1451 by Jean Mansel, the ducal librarian in Lille, and decorated in various stages in around 1450.

The artists of the 1450–1475 generation tried to negotiate a compromise between the two artistic principles and the expectations of the viewers. They had linearism to follow: the style typical of manuscripts, filled with texts, involving the rule of two colours for the letters on parchment or paper. What is more, the mode of reading follows the strokes of letters, that is, it follows the formation of the text on a flat surface, to allow for observation and reading. At the same time, the painter wished to create the illusion of space in his illuminations, to grant the readers access to places beyond the pages of the manuscript; to transform the meaning of abstract, “ornamental” letters into a vision, an image. The illumination is not yet the ‘real’ window to the outside world, as in manuscripts of the next generation, the so-called Bruges and Ghent school of 1475–1510, when the illuminated page essentially stopped being a *text*, and became a full, complete image. The goal was to find a balance between the “ornament of the word” – the text –, and the imaginative quality of the miniature. The line, ornamentation and lettering are full-fledged, if not in fact key elements in the attempt to achieve the critical balance between text and image. The narrative of the images by the Master of Jean Mansel and Simon Marmion, in a similar way to the earlier Parisian Bedford Master, is elaborate, continuous, multifaceted and simultaneous. It creates a vast space by placing scenes in numerous mansions: “houses” that open from the front, resembling the shape of a portico or a loggia.

411 E. Verroken, *De verluchter Jacob de Tavernier (1428–1454) en zijn zoon, de bekende miniaturist Jan de Tavernier*; D. Vanwijnsberghe, E. Verroken, “Jean de Tavernier,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 212–237.

412 M. Gil, L. Nys, *Saint-Omer gothique. Les arts figuratifs à Saint-Omer...*, pp. 168–175; M. Gil, “De Manselmeester,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 389–393.

413 Th. Kren, “Simon Marmion,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 394–403.

Narratives full of movement and action in a somewhat mannerist fashion are characteristic of illuminations in the history books decorated by Loyset Liédet⁴¹⁴ (another copy of *Fleur des histoires* by Jean Mansel, 1460, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale d’Arsenal, mss. 5087–5088; the five volumes of the chivalric romance *Renaud de Montauban*, 1468–1470, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale d’Arsenal, mss. 5072–5075, and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. gall. 7; the third volume of *Les Chroniques de Hainaut*, 1468, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9244; *Les Chroniques de France* by Jean Froissart, 1469–1470, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Dep. Breslau 1; *Faits et gestes d’Alexandre*, 1470, there also, ms. fr. 22547; *Recueil des Histoires de Troie*, after 1469, Brussels Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9261; *Chansons de Charles Martel* or *Histoire de Charles Martel*, 1472, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, mss. 6–9). Willem Vrelant adopted a similar formula of lively narrative for his work⁴¹⁵ (the second volume of the *Chronicles of Hainaut*, completed for Charles the Bold in 1468, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9243).

In all these examples the narratives are continuous both in written descriptions and in the rhythm of their images. The reader’s gaze and attention are not distracted by different interpretive layers and accompanying motifs. The reading and looking remain linear. Both chronicles and history books are read evenly, with a gaze that follows the text and separately, after the turning of the page, the narrative of the images. Therefore, it is a different mode of reading from that required by prayer books. Books of hours trained the reader in tracing the details, focusing their gaze and forming a mode of reception similar to that necessary for engaging with carved or painted devotional images and icons. The history books and chronicles shaped a kind of reading that was important for approaching narrative wall paintings and reliefs; cycles that illustrated their panoramic setting with the scenes of the Passion, the life of the Virgin, and the life and martyrdom of different saints, as will be discussed below (chapters V.3 and VI.8).

It is important to draw attention to the different variants of the act of reading in the late medieval period. It was not always a silent and intimate activity, as it is today. History books and chronicles were read out loud by a lector before the king or the duke. Similarly, the Bible, as *bible historique*, “the chronicle of humanity,” was recited before the ruler. During the liturgy of the Word, the faithful gathered in church to listen to the sacred text and

414 A. Dubois, “Loyset Liédet,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 266–276.

415 A. Dubois, “Willem Vrelant,” in: *Vlaamse miniaturen 1404–1482*, pp. 238–255.

to the related commentary that was expressed orally during the homily. Epic poems and chivalric romances, tales and didactic writings could all be read silently, in private, but undoubtedly, they were also recited during social gatherings, conversations and courtly disputes.

The approach to prayer books, breviaries and books of hours was different, focused on the individual pray-er and personal meditation. However, even these texts were also read out loud. Their role was to assist in spoken prayer, which only subsequently led to a silent meditation upon the meaning of the words.

The text had to be expressed in spoken words. It was not intended only for silent meditation or for the contemplation of its sentences and thoughts. Heard, it materialized in the imagination of the beholder. Through the agency of the voice it was transformed into the image described. It is certain that the panels that combined text and image (discussed below in chapter IV.5) were also read out loud.

IV.2. Inscriptions and texts in paintings: words as artworks

The panel *Corona Beatissimae Virginis Mariae* from the Bernardine church of Corpus Christi in Wrocław (Breslau) (now Warsaw, National Museum), painted c. 1490–1500 [fig. 496], measuring 5 x 3.4m., must have been to the medieval audience something like a monumental wall mural. It was an object to be viewed and read. The reading was essential, because the images form a difficult iconographic and devotional programme.⁴¹⁶ The composition of the panel requires a careful, focused viewing and reading: the monumental figure of the Madonna-Assunta faces the viewer, surrounded by the friars who hold rosaries in their hands and scrolls with the words of the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria* prayers. Over the Virgin's head, the angels support a gigantic crown filled with forty-nine medallions depicted in seven rows, with figurative scenes and accompanying descriptions. From the bottom we see the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Adoration of the Magi, the Presentation in the Temple, the Finding in the Temple (Christ among

416 *Corona Beatissimae Virginis Mariae* from the Bernardine church in Wrocław: K. Zalewska, "Corona beatissime Virginis Marie: Das mittelalterliche gemalte Marien traktat aus der Bernhardinerkirche in Breslau," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 55, 1992, pp. 57–65; K. Zalewska, *Modlitwa i obraz. Średniowieczna ikonografia różańcowa*, Warsaw 1995; R. Slenczka, *Lehrhafte Bildtafeln in spätmittelalterlichen Kirchen*, Cologne–Weimar–Vienna 1998, pp. 283–286; J. Aniołek, "Allegory of the Glory of the Virgin – prayer panel (Corona Beatissimae Virginis Mariae)," in: *The Gallery of Medieval Art*, The National Museum in Warsaw, ed. by A. Ziemia, Warsaw 2017, no. 11.15. pp. 197–200.

the Doctors), and the Assumption of the Virgin. The second row includes medallions with scenes of the Circumcision, the Agony in the Garden, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns, Christ Stripped of his Garments, the Crucifixion (The Nailing to the Cross and the Elevation of the Cross), and the Piercing of Christ's Side. This achronological order follows the logic of the mysteries of the Virgin: the joys and sorrows, though the second group of scenes illustrates the meditation on the *Septem Effusiones Sanguini Domini Nostri* – the Seven Instances of Christ Shedding his Blood (which explains the unusual inclusion of the Circumcision to the Sorrows of the Virgin). Other rows of medallions show the heavenly host (angels, apostles, martyrs, bishop-saints, holy virgins, widows and all the saints in Heaven), the seven deadly sins (pride, envy, wrath, sloth, lust, gluttony, and greed) and the seven heavenly virtues (humility, charity, diligence, love of God, purity, chastity, poverty), as well as the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (*Timor Dei* – fear of the Lord; *Pietas* – piety; *Scientia* – knowledge; *Fortitudo* – fortitude; *Consilium* – counsel; *Intellectus* – understanding; *Sapientia* – wisdom). Lastly, those people who are asked for prayer, and who should be prayed for, (parents, clergymen, lay rulers, friars; travellers, people in need, people who are subject to sinful temptations, and souls in the Purgatory) are represented. To see the scenes in the medallions, in particular those in the higher rows, and to read the inscriptions in the scrolls, one had to strain the eyes and focus the gaze, and even more so as the panel was originally probably displayed high up. The whole was a detailed programme that popularised meditation and the prayer of the rosary, in its version established by Ladislas (Władysław) of Gielniów (c. 1440–1505), the Provincial of the Bernardines in 1487–1490 and 1496–1499. The prayer – *Corona Beatissimae Virginis Mariae*, promoted by the Bernardine order, differed fundamentally from the canonic formula devised by the Dominicans, because it did not focus on the three categories of the mysteries of the Virgin (the joyful, the sorrowful and the glorious mysteries), but on the meditation of the forty-nine themes described above, grouped into seven categories. The themes commenced with the joys of the Virgin related to the Incarnation, then the moments of the shedding of the Holy Blood from Christ's Body (the Passion and Salvation, preceded by the Circumcision as the sign of Christ's future sacrifice, and as a link with the Incarnation), then images depicting the aim of salvation (the heavenly host), followed by the road to Salvation through good deeds (virtue above sin), then the way of achieving salvation (the gifts of the Holy Spirit), and finally the representation of those who need prayer to achieve Salvation.

This type of large-scale panel, destined to be viewed and read, were quite popular in northern art. They had various functions, which will be discussed below (chapter IV.5). The ability to read numerous inscriptions was decisive for the accurate interpretation of the image.



Fig. 496: Master from Breslau/Wrocław, *Corona Beatissimae Virginis Mariae* from the Bernardine Convent in Breslau/Wrocław, 1490–1500, Warsaw, National Museum

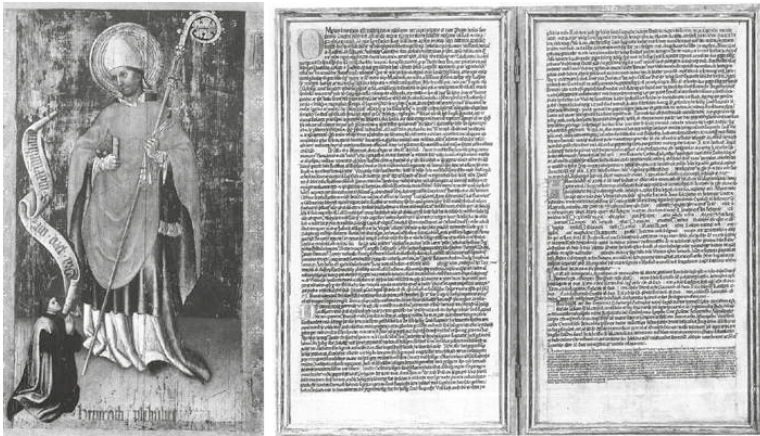


Fig. 497: Austrian Master (Workshop or circle of Conrad Laib?), *Diptych from Bischofshafen: St. Maximilian on the panel of the closed diptych and the indulgence for the Maximilianszelle Monstery on the panels of the open diptych*, mid-fifteenth century, Parish church of Sankt Maximilian in Bischofshofen an der Salzach, Upper Austria

The inscriptions not only complemented and commented upon the depicted image. Often nearly the entire painting became a written text, and was intended to be read rather than viewed. A large diptych from the church in Bischofshofen an der Salzach in Upper Austria (preserved *in situ*; 107 × 62cm), painted in the mid-fifteenth century, in the workshop of Conrad Laib or by his followers [fig. 497], depicts saint Bishop Maximilian on its verso with the figure of the donor, Heinrich Plehuber, kneeling before him, identified by the description at the bottom of the panel.⁴¹⁷ The figures are portrayed at the “flap,” which when lifted reveals the inside of the diptych, which bears beautifully calligraphed text and illuminated initials on parchment glued to its panel. The text, not the image, is the key element of the composition. Taking into account the considerable size of the panel and the meaning of the text, it is unlikely that the text was adapted to the image, or the subsequent incorporation of the text to the diptych, or about the diptych’s role as a frame added to the original written document. From the outset, the large diptych was intended as a written act, an illustrated document to be read. The text describes St. Rupert founding in the eighth century the Maximilianszelle Monastery (*Cella Maximiliana*) in Bischofshofen. It also contains the indulgences for the church, granted in a bull of Pope Nicholas V from 1447, with the papal document cited almost *in extenso*. The portrait of St. Maximilian informed the faithful that absolution occurs thanks to his intercession. The diptych as an object instructed the

417 R. Slenczka, *Lehrhafte Bildtafeln...*, cat. no. II.2.

faithful about the way to receive forgiveness of their sins, but it was not merely an illustrated admonition, or a didactic panel painting. As a written document and a picture to be looked at, it *granted* that forgiveness; the panel itself, through the agency of the read text, created the religious reality of the location, granting the indulgence to the sinners and restoring their Salvation. The text, accompanied by the image, had a socially active power.

The object – not the human, the believer – was the agent in social and religious situations. Through its agency the place – both the church and the town – became a pilgrimage site. It stimulated the common piety and controlled the religious life of local communities and their incoming pilgrims. The panel empowered the bishops of Salzburg, the successors of Maximilian and Rupert, as supervisors and rulers of the site and its community, founded upon the cult of Maximilian. The text – the bureaucratic act, the document – created in front of the quasi-painted object (the panel of the diptych), became the active “actor” – the agent (*agens*), “actant” (*actio*); the active factor, the activist. It is the true transformer of social reality, defined by the leading posthumanist of contemporary socio-philosophy, Bruno Latour, as the “actor-network:” as an interconnectedness of events, constructed by objects, animals and other non-human factors (“non-humans,” *unhumans*), more than by the humans (ANT – *Actor-Network Theory*).⁴¹⁸ The text, created by men, gains its independence and produces social entities and events, like the diptych from Bischofshofen, which caused certain religious behaviours in a specific space. To capture the active function of the text – reproducing, multiplying and expanding its role, creating new social entities and institutions, establishing norms, customs, mental rules, ideologies and social logics – we do not necessarily need to follow the posthumanist researchers working on the social theory and history of contemporary countries, with their “technopower” (relying on the power of technology and self-multiplying bureaucracy). Those scholars use the examples of England during the Industrial Revolution, or those postcolonial countries formed within or on the confines of the British Empire during colonialism (for instance, Patrick Joyce in his work on the British Empire and the India Office, or Timothy P. Mitchell’s study of colonial Egypt⁴¹⁹).

418 B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social...*; K. Abriszewski, *Poznanie, zbiorowość, polityka. Analiza teorii aktora-sieci Bruno Latoura*, Cracow 2008. Cf note no. 2.

419 P. Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later 19th-century England*, Broughton 1980; his, *Democratic Subjects: The Self and the Social in Nineteenth-century England*, Cambridge University Press 1994; his, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class 1848–1914*, California University Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1991; *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the City in Britain*, London–New York 2003; his, *The Soul of Leviathan: The Making of the British Technostate, in progress*; T. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*, California University Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles 2002.

Meanwhile, beyond the realm of the trendy key themes of sociology and history, the phenomenon can be traced in previous communities; the works of art of fifteenth-century Europe often document it with great clarity.



Fig. 498: *Diptych and Prayer Book of Philip the Good*, c. 1430–1450, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1800

The aforementioned diptych of the Burgundian Duke Philip the Good is both the image and the text. It is a combination of a codex with prayers, in a wooden cover, with gilded and painted images depicting the Holy Trinity with Christ on the cross and the Coronation of the Virgin in the upper sections on the inside (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1800; images of the diptych painted c. 1430; manuscript illumination c. 1450; measurements 35 × 14.2cm; the dimensions of the pages of the book

18.5 × 12.7–13cm)⁴²⁰ [fig. 498]. The book and the diptych form a single object. The artefact structured the Duke's private piety, enacted through the opening of the diptych's wings and his leafing through the manuscript; his viewing of the images in the panels and illuminations, and his reading and reciting of the prayers. The 'codex-diptych' had a considerable advantage over two separate objects of just a book and a diptych. It combined all the functions and roles of various religious artefacts. The activities of unfolding, leafing through, watching, reading, reciting: these engaged the three senses of touch, sight and hearing. The physical manipulation of the object and the reading conducted before it were complemented by the voice reciting, whispering or humming the chosen prayer. The object activated the body of the beholder, directing it through devotional practices that secured not only the individual's salvation, but also their place in the codified social procedure. This procedure was a form of devotion based on prayer books, the manifestation of elite individual piety through costly artefacts – the illuminated manuscript or the devotional diptych, that in this instance were merged into one 'codex-diptych,' or 'book-altarpiece.'

The merging of a book and a diptych into a single multisensory object was beneficial also for practical reasons: the artefact was more portable. The object was a travelling altarpiece, used in the unusually mobile lifestyle of the Burgundian dukes, who constantly changed their residences. Philip the Good travelled frequently between Dijon, Paris, Lille, Bruges, Brussels, Ghent and other Netherlandish cities. This lifestyle was important in controlling his vast territory, and in affirming his power through his repeated presence in different places. The physical presence of a ruler was the most effective way of governing at that time. This process was supported by the instruments of private piety: books and altarpieces. The monarch and the duke were expected to manifest their devotion, not only through the active participation in the mass and other public religious ceremonies, but equally through spreading their image as a deeply pious person, through their individual religiosity, which in the case of the sovereign was never truly private. *Pietas* was a compulsory component of earthly power. That is why the duke is depicted in the codex, alone or with his son Charles, in prayer addressed to the Holy Trinity, shown in the upper panels of the diptych, or to various saints represented in the codex's illuminations. He is also present as a witness to the Mass of St. Gregory. The first opening of the codex provides information about the owner: the full-page image of the duke and his son

420 O. Mazal, D. Thoss, *Das Buchaltärchen Herzog Philipps des Guten von Burgund: Codex 1800 der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien / Le Livre-autel de Philippe le Bon, duc de Bourgogne: Codex 1800 de la Bibliothèque nationale autrichienne de Vienne*, facsimile edition with commentary, Luzern 1991.

on the left page are framed by the emblems of the House of Burgundy, and in the margin of the right page is the ruler's personal coat-of-arms.

The traces of pilgrim badges impressed on the first and last pages of the book confirm the portable character of the object. These badges were frequently sewn into the bindings of prayer books, which were carried by pilgrims. The duke probably also participated in similar devotional practices, visiting pilgrim sites during his political journeys.

This and similar devotional artefacts, which were intended to be viewed and read, were of course precious objects, skillfully made, and which pointed to the elite status of their owners. However, it must be emphasized that these objects were not simply owned: they also possessed power over their owners. They obliged the beholder to use them, to pray regularly (the office of the Virgin), to meditate, and to contemplate the tenets of the Christian faith. Among the courtly elites these objects were the catalyst for establishing the customs through which religious devotions were enacted. They were a product of religious fashion, but they regulated, nourished and maintained this custom. The prayer books, devotional triptychs, diptychs and paintings – which were created by humans – took over the active cultural function of their owners. Inherited, donated, bequeathed, copied, and imitated, they led their own lives by becoming widespread in various communities. At the same time, they propagated a specific type of piety among the social elites of the time. They shaped people's mentality and behavior, forming the social culture of the age.

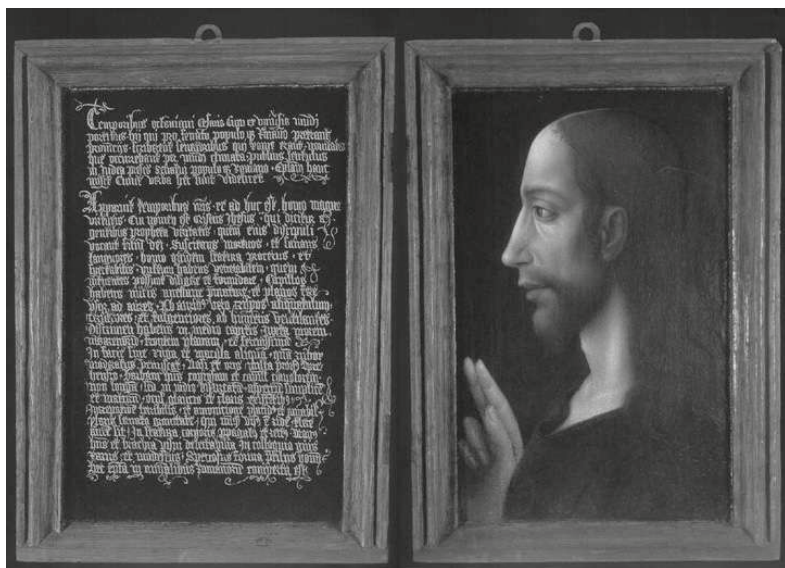


Fig. 499: Netherlandish Master, *Diptych of the Holy Face and the Letter of Lentulus*, c. 1500, Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent

We do not know the original owner and the intended function of the diptych, formed of a painting and a full page text, known as the *Diptych of the Holy Face* from the Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht, a work by a Netherlandish master dated to the end of the fifteenth or early sixteenth century (37 × 26.7cm) [fig. 499].⁴²¹ Closed, it resembles a box painted red; when opened it shined within its frames, which were originally gilded. The right wing shows the portrait of Christ (*Vera Effigies Domini Nostri Ihesu Christi*), shown from profile in the Italian fashion, against the Netherlandish tradition developed by Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus, Dirk Bouts, Hans Memling and others. The Netherlandish masters depicted Christ frontally to refer to two relics: the Veraikon – St. Veronica’s sudarium (the veil on which Christ impressed his face or, according to a later variant of the legend, with which a woman called Berenice-Veronica wiped Christ’s face during His walk to Calvary),⁴²² preserved initially in Santa Maria Maggiore (from 705), and then in the Basilica of St. Peter’s in Rome; and to the Mandyllion – sent by Christ to Abgar, king of Edessa, to cure him of leprosy. The icon from the church of San Bartolomeo degli Armeni in Genoa, is believed to be another miraculous image of Christ’s face related to the Mandyllion, according to the archives displayed there since the fourteenth century. The left wing shows, in calligraphed golden letters, text from the apocryphal *Letter of Publius Lentulus*, governor of Judea, written to the Roman Senate or to the Emperor Augustus, which describes in detail Christ’s physical appearance. In reality, the text was probably written in Italy in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and in the fifteenth century it was disseminated in the Netherlands.⁴²³ A nearly identical description

421 J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington – Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen, in collaboration with Harvard University Art Museum, Cambridge and Yale University Press, New Haven–London, 2006, cat. no. 29.

422 The legend of St. Veronica is documented from the second quarter of the fifteenth century. However, the roots of the cult of the Veraikon are much more ancient (at least from the year 705). The cult was linked to the belief that it was a miraculous veil, with which the saint healed the emperor Tiberius or an image painted miraculously after Christ healed Veronica, or in any case that it is the second miraculously created image of Christ’s face – apart from the Mandyllion of King Abgar (often confused with these relics, thinking that it was brought by the crusaders from Constantinople in 1204).

423 J.O. Hand, “‘Salve Sancta Facies’: Some thoughts on the iconography of the ‘Head of Christ’ by Petrus Christus,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 27, 1992, pp. 7–18; *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation: Papers from a*

appears in a popular devotional handbook, the *Vita Christi* by Ludolf of Saxony (Ludolf von Sachsen, c. 1295–1377).

The diptych from Utrecht combines the two equivalent elements, image and text: the description comments on the image, and the image visualises the description. The text is comparable with the image, and vice versa. The written and painted object creates a space for private devotion: it codifies the imagination of the Saviour's physical appearance; it allows the beholder to discover it, to pray to it, to meditate upon it and contemplate its character. However, it does not provide the words of the prayer, therefore it is not an auxiliary religious tool, or a devotional set of instructions. It does not have a didactic function. It depicts the Holy Face, and becomes its substitute, just like a relic. Here and now Christ is present in both painted and written form. The object allows viewers to keep the reflection of the sacred at home, or in a private chapel. Upon opening its wings, it fills these spaces with momentary sanctity. At the same time, it requires from the beholder certain religious practices, such as meditation upon the text and image. It also enables the faithful to explore their own identity. It is an image of God incarnate; the image that illustrates the “mak[ing of] man in our image, after our likeness,” (Genesis 1:26, King James Version); therefore, every human being is a reproduction of the prototype of the perfect body.

Colloquium Held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996, ed. by H.L. Kessler, G. Wolf, Bologna 1998; A. Sturgis in: *The Image of Christ*, ed. G. Finaldi, exh. cat. *Seeing Salvation*, National Gallery, London 2000, cat. no. 40; Ph. Helas in: *Il Volto di Cristo*, ed. G. Morelli, G. Wolf, exh. cat. Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome 2000, pp. 215–226; J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 29. See also H. Belting, *Bild und Kult. Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*, Munich 1990; in English: *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, Chicago 1993 chapter 11: *The “Holy Face”*: *Legends and Images in Competition*; his, *Das echte Bild. Bildfragen als Glaubensfragen*, Munich 2005; his, *Faces. Eine Geschichte des Gesichts*, Munich 2014, (in English: *Face and Mask: A Double History*, Princeton 2017), chapter II.10; G. Wolf, “Vera Icon,” in: *Handbuch der Bildtheologie*, vol. 3: *Zwischen Zeichen und Präsenz*, ed. R. Hoeps, Paderborn 2014, pp. 419–466; A. Nicolotti, *From the Mandylicon of Edessa to the Shroud of Turin: The metamorphosis and manipulation of a legend*, Leiden – Boston 2014; *Das Christusbild. Zu Herkunft und Entwicklung in Ost und West*, (congress Würzburg–Vienna 2014–2015), ed. by K. Dietz, Ch. Hannick, C. Lutzka, E. Maier, Würzburg 2016; *The European fortune of the Roman Veronica in the Middle Ages*, ed. by A. Murphy, H.L. Kessler, M. Petoletti, E. Duffy, G. Milanese, V. Tvrzníková, (conference Brno 2017), Turnhout 2017; E.D. Wise, “Amber, Blood, and the Holy Face of Jesus: The materiality of devotion in late medieval Bruges,” in: *Quid est sacramentum?...*, pp. 320–353.

At times quite elaborate inscriptions appeared in paintings, but many Netherlandish artists preferred to limit them only to the frames or versos of panels.

Telling texts, which give voice to silent paintings, characterise Jan van Eyck's works and those of his Bruges followers: Petrus Christus and Hans Memling.



Fig. 500: Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of the Arnolfini couple*, 1434, London, The National Gallery



Fig. 501: Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of a Man with the Green Chaperon* (so-called *Timotheus*), 1432, London, The National Gallery



Fig. 502: Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of a Man with the Green Chaperon* (so-called *Timotheus*) – detail showing the inscription on the parapet



Fig. 503: Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, 1436, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 504: Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of the Artist's Wife, Margaret van Eyck*, 1439, Bruges, Groeningemuseum

It was only rarely that van Eyck introduced inscriptions onto the painterly surface of his works, as in the *Arnolfini Portrait* (London, National Gallery): *Johannes de Eyck fuit hic / 1434* – “Jan van Eyck was ” (‘on a visit, as a guest at this house’ and he certificated this in the painting?) – which invites the viewer to watch and penetrate with their gaze the inside of the house [fig. 500]; or the words *LEAL SOVVENIR*, ‘carved’ into the stone parapet in the *Portrait of a Man with the Green Chaperon*, (1432, London, National Gallery; called *Timotheus* because of a small Latin inscription written in Greek letters: *TUM OTHEOS*) [fig. 501], which mean “loyal remembrance” in French: a faithful record, or commemoration. Perhaps the word *leal*, which is similar to *legale*, suggests that the painting acts as a legal testimony, a formal identification of the depicted man. This seems to be supported by another inscription, using the wording of a notarial act: *Actu[m] an[no] d[omi]ni 1432.10.die octobris. a ioh[anne] de Eyck* (“Finished [made] in the year of our Lord 1432 on the 10th day of October by Jan van Eyck”). It is significant that these inscriptions are included in the portraits. They transform the painting into a legal mark of the person’s presence: it is a form of identification, the legal proof of their existence in the community, and a testimony of the true appearance of the sitter.

However, Van Eyck more typically plays with the viewer through the inscriptions on the frames of his work. In religious paintings, the relation between the text and the image is simple, with the former stressing the visual message, as in the *Diptych of the Annunciation* (Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza) [fig. 502], which includes the dialogue: *Ave [Maria] gratia plena...* and *Ecce ancilla domini...* painted on the illusionistic stone frame above the heads of the Virgin and Archangel Gabriel, themselves depicted as figures carved in stone. In this way – oh the paradox of illusionistic painting! – the stone has spoken. Sometimes the text is significantly expanded, running along the entire length of the frame. In the case of the *Madonna van der Paele* from Bruges, the *Dresden Triptych*, and the *New York Diptych* by his workshop (with the *Crucifixion* and the *Last Judgment*), the object requires the viewer to read long phrases, as equally important for the meaning of the work as the painted image. Given the small scale of the altarpieces from Dresden and New York, it is likely that the objects were turned around by the owner and all potential viewers to enable them to decipher the message. The inscription runs along the frame, so that in the bottom section the text is written upside-down; the words could not therefore be read when the painting was displayed on a wall, table or shelf.

In the *Portrait of Goldsmith Jan de Leeuw* (1436, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) [fig. 503], the inscription on the upper band of the frame reads: “Jan De [Leeuw], who first opened his eyes on the feast of St. Ursula [= 21 October],

1401. Now Jan van Eyck has painted me, you can see when he began it. 1436” (*Jan de [Leeuw] op Sankt Orselen dach dat claeer eerst met oghen sach 1401 gheconterfeit nu heeft mi Jan van Eyck wel blijct wanneert bega[n] 1436*). The word *Leeuw* was replaced by a small image of a lion, a pictogram of the surname, and at the same time a golden object, an allusion to metalwork – a reference to the profession of the man portrayed. The inscription highlights two dates: the date of birth and the moment when the image was created. The painting itself becomes a document: it contains the sitter’s personal data (date of birth, profession, the painting’s date of creation) and confirms his appearance (and therefore functions like a photograph in an identity document). It is in this way, and only through the agency of the inscription (deprived of it the act would lose its credibility), that the painting registers and commemorates the presence of the person. Strikingly enough, the inscriptions on the frames of Van Eyck’s portraits do not speak in his voice – that of the maker of the image. The inscriptions are words uttered either by the painting itself, as in the *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, or by the sitter, as in the case of the portrait of the painter’s wife, Margaret van Eyck, (1439, Bruges, Groeningemuseum) [fig. 504]. She speaks to the viewer in words inscribed in the frame: “My husband, Johannes, completed me in the year 1439 on 17th June, at the age of 33. As I can.” (*Conius meus Johannes me complevit anno 1439 17 iunii / Aetas mea triginta trium annorum. Als ich xan [Als ich can]*).⁴²⁴ In the portrait from Bruges, actually all the subjects: the sitter, the object and the painter speak to the viewer through the inscription. In this case, the image became identifiable with the person: the material thing with a human – at first with the sitter and then the author self. With this identification the viewer enters into a dialogue when reading these inscriptions, if not with the painter, with the sitter or with the object? Or with all these entities at once? The question is not facetious; the issue is in fact rather important. The painting, as a material object, is the personification of the body and the spirit of the sitter; it therefore, in some sense, also a legally valid substitute for them. The object is not only a visible sign of the human being, and their representation, but also the real embodiment of the person. The painting, speaking sometimes in the sitter’s voice, sometimes its own, disassociates itself from the painter-maker, painter-creator. In this dialogue with the viewer, the object adopts human

424 D. de Vos, “Van Eycks vernunft. Het opschrift van het Portret van Jan de Leeuw,” in: *Florissant. Bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis der Nederlanden (15^{de}–17^{de} eeuw)*, ed. A. Balis, Brussels 2005, pp. 45–49. For the inscription on the *Portrait of Margaret van Eyck* see A. Janssens de Bisthoven, M. Baes-Dondeyne, D. de Vos, *Les Primitifs Flamands I. Corpus. Musée Communal des Beaux-Arts (Musée Groeninge) Bruges*, 3rd edition, Brussels 1983, vol. I, p. 179; *Renaissance Faces...*, p. 180; *The restoration of ‘Margaret, the Artist’s Wife’: The inscriptions and frame mouldings*, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/research/research-papers/the-restoration-of-margaret-the-artists-wife/panel-and-frame-construction> (2009).

qualities: the ability to speak, to communicate verbally, to persuade, to comment. The painting becomes the agent controlling the situation. It creates it realistically (by forcing the viewer to read the text and to identify the sitter, located within the network of social communication) and symbolically (by representing the figure and ensuring their commemoration through contact with the individual beholder). An individual, materially specific thing speaks to the potential beholder, to the social group of its contemporaries and to the unspecified, yet always socially constructed, posterity. Its message is more or less this: “I, the painting, am this person you are looking at and about whom you are reading; I am this goldsmith from Bruges or this noble lady, the wife of the famous ducal painter. They exist in your world and your community, as they existed in my world; remember them, me, and perhaps also the painter.”

Perhaps, Van Eyck referred here to the antique topos of the image, who lacks only the voice, because it is so highly mimetic— or of the image so life-like that it seems to be speaking or to be able to speak at any moment. This topos originated in the epigrams by Statius, Martial, Ausonius and Christodoros, collected in the *Anthologia Graeca*. Subsequently, Petrarch adopted the topos in his sonnet about the portrait of Laura painted by Simone Martini— with which the poet wishes to speak and which can hear him, but cannot respond⁴²⁵— and consequently it entered the mainstream of artistic historiography in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Filippo Villani wrote in 1381–1382 that Giotto’s figures were breathing, and seemed to be speaking, crying, or laughing; Bartolomeo Fazio, writing in praise of Jan van Eyck in 1456, commented that the portrait of Giovanni Battista Lomellini, painted in one of his triptychs, “lacked only the voice.”⁴²⁶ These themes were important elements of the humanist theory of *mimesis* and the concept of *vivacità*; that is, of producing the effect of a living presence. They were related to the medieval texts about the images of the Virgin and saints speaking to the faithful, or the popular vision of the Crucified Christ speaking to St. Francis from the painted crucifix.⁴²⁷

Sometimes one had to read what was unwritten.

425 *Porträt (Geschichte der klassischen Bildgattungen in Quellentexten und Kommentaren 2)*, ed. R. Preimesberger, H. Baader, N. Suthor, Berlin 1999, pp. 177–178, commentary pp. 179–188. For the topos of speaking or voiceless pictures see J.A. Emmens, “Ay Rembrandt, maal Cornelis stem,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek 7*, 1956, pp. 133–165 (reprinted in J.A. Emmens, *Kunsthistorische opstellen*, vol. I, Amsterdam 1981, pp. 61–97). More generally – see M. Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350–1450*, Oxford 1971, chapter II; D. Wagner, “The Vocal in The Visual: Auditory Issues and the Potential of the Voice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Visual Art,” in: *The Multi-Sensory Image From Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. by H. Hunter-Crawley, E. O’Brien, London–New York 2019, pp. 135–153.

426 M. Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators...*, pp. 70–72 and 146–148 (for Villani), 103–109 and 163–167 (for Fazio).

427 D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images...*, chapter 11.

IV.3. Empty banderols: reading the unwritten

Many prints included empty scrolls that had to be filled in by the beholder. The *Annunciation* by the Master E.S. (L. 8–9, 11–13) or by Martin Schongauer (L. 1–3) [figs. 505–506] require the faithful to actually or imaginatively inscribe the empty spaces with the words of the commonly known text of the *Angelic Salutation*, thus encouraging the viewer to practise the text of the *Hail Mary*. In turn, the scene of the Baptism of Christ (Master E.S., L. 29) forced the beholder to remind oneself of John the Baptist’s words: “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) – an important fragment of the liturgy, uttered by the participants in the mass – and God’s words: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22) [fig. 507]. It is notable that the empty scrolls, in general, do not appear in other prints with religious scenes by these masters. therefore, they were to be inscribed with well-known texts, to encourage viewers to practise prayers and phrases from the mass.



Fig. 505: Master E.S., *The Annunciation*, c. 1450–1455, engraving, Vienna, Albertina



Fig. 506: Martin Schongauer, *The Annunciation*, engraving, c. 1470–1480, Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle



Fig. 507: Master E.S., *The Baptism of Christ*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett

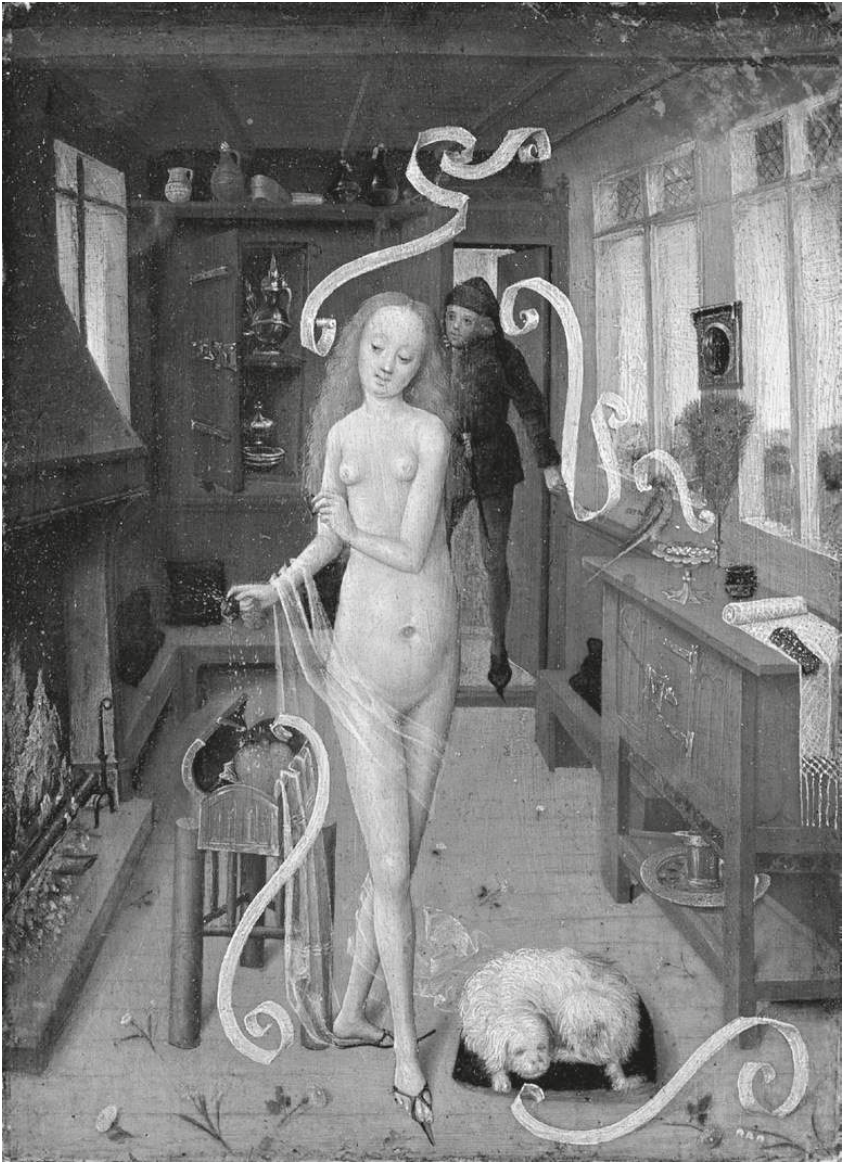


Fig. 508: Painter from the Lower Rhine area (Master of the Diptych of Bonn), *Love Magic (Liebeszauber)*, c. 1470, Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Kunst



Fig. 509: Housebook Master, *Portrait of a Couple*, c. 1480–1485, Gotha, Herzogliches Museum (formerly in Schlossmuseum)

Empty scrolls also appeared frequently in panel paintings. The *Annunciation* by the Master of Liesborn (Johannes von Soest?), a panel from the winged altarpiece of the Benedictine abbey at Liesborn (c. 1485–1490, London, National Gallery),⁴²⁸ includes the words of the angelic salutation: *Ave [Maria], gratia plena, Dominus tecum* inscribed on a scroll that winds around the staff held by the archangel. But the scrolls held by the

428 *Altarpiece from Liesborn: Der Liesborner Altar. Die Bilder der Nationalgalerie in London und des Landesmuseum in Münster*, exh. cat., Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster 1966; P. Pieper, *Die deutschen, niederländischen und italienischen Tafelbilder bis um 1530*, cat. of the collection, Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster 1986, no. 84–1; *Imagination des Unsichtbaren. 1200 Jahre Bildende Kunst in Bistum Münster*, ed. by G. Jászay, R. Brandl, exh. cat., Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte, Münster 1993, cat. no. 2.25; R. Brandl, “The Liesborn Altarpiece: A new reconstruction,” *Burlington Magazine* 135, 1993, pp. 180–189; A. Prieuer, “Anmerkungen zum Schicksal des Hochaltars und des Heilig-Kreuz-Altars der ehemaligen

stone figures of the prophets placed on the columns flanking the archway, through which we see the events, remain empty. The viewer had to fill them in imaginatively with texts from the Old Testament prophecies – perhaps those of Isaiah or Zechariah – about the coming of the Saviour, whose figure stands on a base, suspended between the windows in the background.

A particularly striking example of a scene that includes empty banderols is *The Magic of Love (Liebeszauber)*, a small painting from a school of the Lower Rhine – perhaps that of the Master of the Bonn Diptych, or a different painter from Cologne – dated c. 1470 (pearwood panel: 24 × 18cm, painted surface: 22 × 16cm; Leipzig, Museum der Bildenden Künste) [fig. 508].⁴²⁹ It depicts a domestic chamber, furnished and presented in a highly realistic manner. In the room, an unusual scene takes place: a young lad, elegantly and fashionably dressed, peers through the open doors into the room, spying on a beautiful nude girl. With her golden hair down, she is dressed only in a transparent veil, which certainly does not cover her body; on the contrary it simply highlights her nudity. She wears only sandals on her feet and nothing else. Her breasts, belly, womb and thighs are exposed, and the clearly sexualised body is presented in a highly sensual pose. The unambiguous motif of the “instrument” or “tool” (in the form of a long dagger or a small sword, which is shifted on the lad’s belt so that it hangs

Klosterkirche Liesborn,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 65, 2004, pp. 301–314; *Macht des Wortes. Benediktinisches Mönchtum im Spiegel Europas*, exh. cat. Sankt Paul im Lavanttal – Klostermuseum Dahlheim, Paderborn 2009, vol. II, exh. cat. 9.11; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 91.

- 429 *The Magic of Love (Liebeszauber) from Leipzig*: H.M. Schmidt, *Der Meister des Marienlebens und sein Kreis. Studien zur spätgotischen Malerei in Köln*, Düsseldorf 1979, pp. 102–103 (as the Master of the Bonn Diptych c.1485); G. Winkler, *Museum der Bildenden Künste Leipzig. Auswahlkatalog*, Leipzig 1979; R. Dieckhoff, “Liebeszauber. Die Erotisierung des Alltags im Spätmittelalter und der beginnenden Neuzeit,” in: *Die Braut. Geraubt, vertauscht, gekauft, getraut. Zur Rolle der Frau im Kulturvergleich*, ed. G. Vögler, K. von Welck, Cologne 1985, vol. I, pp. 354–361; B. Lymant, “Entflammen und Löschen. Zur Ikonographie des Liebeszaubers vom Meister des Bonner Diptychons,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 57, 1994, pp. 111–122; J. Nicolaisen, “Einige Beobachtungen zur ‚Privatisierung‘ des gedruckten Bildes im 15. Jahrhundert. Publikum und Gebrauch des Kupferstichs,” in: *Spiegel der Seligkeit. Privates Bild und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter*, ed. by Ulrich Großmann, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 2000, pp. 84–94; *Glanz und Größe des Mittelalters. Kölner Meisterwerke aus den großen Sammlungen der Welt*, ed. D. Täube, M.V. Fleck, exh. cat. Schnütgen Museum Cologne, Munich 2011, cat. no. 212, pp. 455–457; D.L. Dechant, “Fascinated by fascination: Female privacy and the Leipzig ‘Love Magic’ panel,” in: *Visions of enchantment: occultism, magic and visual culture*, ed. by D. Zamani, J. Noble, M. Cox, Lopen 2019, pp. 39–49.

between his thighs) enhances the highly erotic character of the depiction. It is impossible to argue for the accidental or careless placement of this detail, and there can hardly be a more straightforward reference to the phallus.

The girl is surrounded by meaningful objects: the dog sleeping at her feet; flowers spread across the floor; the flickering fire in the fireplace; a wardrobe with a brass chalice and jug; a mirror on the window frame, and below the window a chest with various objects placed on it: a chalice encrusted with pearls; a peacock's feather in an ornamental stand; a towel and a sponge (?); and a parrot seated on the edge of the chalice. All these elements refer to the sphere of sensory passions, or, conversely, to spiritual purity. The metal containers and objects for washing refer to the purification of the body and soul, and thus to pure or deceitful love; objects such as the mirror, pearls, the peacock's feather and the parrot refer to vanity; the fire to lust and desire. The dog is the common symbol of fidelity in love and marriage, but it also refers to vigilance, and to the soul's alertness to Satan's temptations and to sin; but here is the dog truly dormant, or does it only feign sleep? It is also a symbol of domesticity, and a synonym for lust (a bitch in heat). Similarly, the pearls and the mirror have a twofold meaning. On the one hand, they stand for purity, virtue and an unblemished soul; on the other, they function as a clear attribute of vanity. The flowers on the floor can refer to fertility or to physical desire, or to the beauty of the soul. The parrot and the peacock are beautiful, colourful, precious, exotic birds of "paradise," with all the implicit ambiguities of paradise: as a symbol of original innocence, and of original sin; both birds are traditionally associated with *Vanitas*, vanity, *Luxuria*, lust, or *Superbia*, pride. Finally, the most obscure motif is placed in the centre of the composition: the beaming, red heart held in a box by the girl, who casts sparks from the fire over it and simultaneously sprinkles it with liquid from the sponge – perhaps a balm, or a love potion.

How should one make sense out of these ambiguous motifs, employed freely in traditional symbolism? How should we interpret the depicted scene? Is the girl performing love magic? Is she casting a spell on someone – perhaps on this young lad or on someone else? Are her intentions pure or evil? Is she a benign enchantress or a sorceress? Is she performing white magic or vicious witchcraft? Is she trying to make someone fall in love with her, or to trap an innocent man? Are her deeds perhaps an act of revenge taken against an unfaithful lover? Is it an attempt to secure a future husband, through fortune-telling on St. Andrew's day (which had a long medieval tradition)?⁴³⁰ Perhaps, it is a scene of torturing of the male heart,

430 This tradition is discussed by Reiner Dieckhoff (*Liebeszauber...*), who cited the custom of melting of wax figures, with the name of the beloved man. In the painting from Leipzig there are no wax figures, nor any other hints at using wax for spells or fortune-telling.

which is at once ablaze and rapidly cooled down; the scene of igniting the fire of love and extinguishing the heart burning from desire? Is it a perverse response on the part of the seemingly well-behaved and modest German patricians to the contemporary witch-hunt, which intensified in the 1470s and 80s (1484: bull of Pope Innocent VII *Summis desiderantes affectibus*; 1486: the publication of *Malleus Maleficarum* by Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger as a handbook for “witch-hunters”)? Or is it an example of the appropriation of a popular motif, that of sorceresses and erotic magic, inspired by courtly poetry and literature and described in illuminated manuscripts, which often played with the motif of the heart (for instance, the allegorical figure of a protagonist named *Cueur* – that is *Coeur*, *Heart* – in the poem of the King René d’Anjou entitled *Cueur d’Amour Espris*; or else the love songbooks, prayer books or books of hours in the shape of a heart)? Or was it both? There is no end to similar speculations and imaginative associations that may be construed; the image remains open to a variety of interpretations.

Brigitte Lyman (1994) offers a purely iconographic interpretation of the image, distanced from its social context. She suggests that the girl heats up and immediately cools down the heart. The motif of the tortured man’s heart appears on cases and chests (*Minnekästchen*) from the Upper Rhine region c. 1400: taken or ripped out of the lad-lover’s chest, hit with a hammer, planed, cut, forged in a smithy *etc.* The torturing of the heart split from the body is an ancient literary topos, going back to Ovid, and one which functioned in medieval poetry and epic. There it symbolises unfortunate, unreciprocated love, or the tortures of love. The setting on fire of love, and the heating up of the heart, are widespread metaphors in German medieval poetry from at least the twelfth century. They appear also in art, in the iconography of *Frau Minne*, and for instance in the woodcut by Master Casper of 1479, where a beautiful but cruel Lady Love tortures in various ways the heart of her faithful lover, including throwing it into the fire. The metaphor of setting the heart ablaze – again, current since Ovid (*Remedia amoris*) – was complemented by putting out fire of love. The fire of love is always full of pain, which leads to illness (*mal d’amour*), and a fever that has to be cured by the subject of the affection. According to Lyman, the girl in the Leipzig painting does precisely that, in turn setting the heart ablaze and then putting out its fire. The girl is not a witch or a sorceress, but an allegory of love, which consumes men and empowers women. The accumulated, meaningful objects displayed in the chamber add a moralizing dimension to that allegory.

Whether the *Liebeszauber* from Leipzig is a sophisticated allegory or a mere reflection of the popular fantasies about the eroticism of female ‘magic,’ the banderols should be filled with a text that refers to the romantic metaphors

of setting a heart on fire and putting the fire of love out. Previous scholars believed that the banderols were intended to be filled, but for some reason this original plan was not carried out, and thus the painting remained incomplete. Today, we know that empty banderols are typical for fifteenth-century prints, and that the practice served to activate and motivate the beholder to either inscribe text directly onto the surface of the print themselves, or to fill in the blank space in their own minds. This must have been the case with the Leipzig painting, a small-scale work that is clearly a private commission. It is possible to imagine that the owner intended to fill the banderols with his own hand-written phrases, or with text written by a professional scribe. However, we should not exclude the possibility that leaving the space deliberately empty allowed viewers the freedom to inscribe it imaginatively with messages that were personally appealing, and either erotic or moralising. The image with empty scrolls, to be filled in with a commentary or a literary text, became the subject of mental manipulation by the viewer, but at the same time it also controlled the beholder. It forced the viewer to interpret the scene according to literary sources and ethical or moralising texts that were familiar to the beholder.

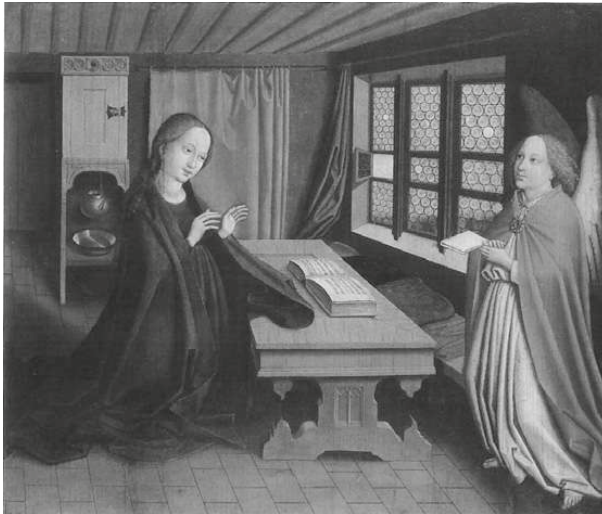


Fig. 510: Jost Haller, *The Annunciation*, c. 1450, Basel, Kunstmuseum



Fig. 511: Master Georg (*Georgius pictor*), *The Annunciation*, panel of the triptych from St Michael's church in Wawel, 1517, Cracow, National Museum, Czartoryski Collection



Fig. 512: Jan van Eyck, *The Madonna of the Chancellor Nicolas Rolin*, c. 1435, Paris, Musée du Louvre

Different images about love, which included banderols with fixed phrases, did not allow such freedom to their owners. A double portrait from Gotha (formerly Schlossmuseum, now Herzögliches Museum; c. 1480–1485, 118 × 82.5cm)⁴³¹ [fig. 509], attributed to the Housebook Master

431 The Housebook Master (*Hausbuchmeister*), *The Portrait of a Young Couple from Gotha*: G. Rudloff-Hille, “Das Doppelbildnis eines Liebespaares unter dem Hanauischen Wappen im Schloßmuseum in Gotha,” *Bildende Kunst* 1968, pp. 19–23; J.C. Hutchison, *The Master of the Housebook*, New York 1972, pp. 66–80; J. P. Filedt Kok, *Livelier than Life...*, cat. no. 133; H. Bock, “Die Verlobung Eppstein–Eppstein 1494 und das ‘Gothaer Liebespaar,’” *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 87/88, 1992/1993, pp. 157–182; D. Hess, *Meister um das “mittelalterliche Hausbuch.” Studien zur Hausbuchmeisterfrage*, Mainz 1994; D. Hess, *Das Gothaer Liebespaar. Ein ungleiches Paar im Gewand höfischer Minne*, Frankfurt a.M. 1996; A. Dülberg, A. Schuttwolf, *Jahreszeiten der Gefühle. Das Gothaer Liebespaar und die Minne im Spätmittelalter*, exh.

(Hausbuchmeister), includes two highly decorative scrolls with inscriptions. The one near the woman reads: *Sye hat uch nyt gantz veracht Dye uch dsz Schnürlin hat gemacht* – “She has not rejected you, on the contrary she woven together this cord for you.” The second one, near the man, responds: *Un byllich het Sye esz gedan Want Ich han esz sye genissen lan* – “She did good, as I will gladly try it [succumb to her charm].” The woman allows the text to speak for her, as the phrase uses the third person, whilst the man speaks directly, about himself. Notably, he speaks of “her” not “you” and therefore it is not a dialogue between the two depicted figures. The text is a commentary on their relationship, rather than a declaration of love (contrary to what is often written in publications about the painting).

Scholars continue to debate the actual the identity of the portrayed figures and whether the couple is engaged or married (the woman wears a coif). It has been suggested that the portrait celebrates the engagement of members of the aristocratic Eppstein family from Hessen, Eberhard IV von Eppstein-Königstein and Agnes von Eppstein-Münzenberg, who joined together the two branches of their extended family (hence the singular, joined coat-of-arms displayed above the couple, and the scrolls: symmetrically juxtaposing the emblems of the two branches, as identified by Hartmut Bock (1992/1993). However, in the 1494 the marriage contract was annulled, and the woman was married to Emich VIII Count of Leiningen. Others suggest that the painting shows Count Philipp von Hanau-Münzenberg the Younger (1449–1500) and his morganatic wife, from a middle class family from Hanau, Weiszkircher (Weißkircher), whom he married after the death of his previous wife, Adriana von Nassau, in 1477, who gave birth to his three

cat. Schlossmuseum Gotha 1998; K. Niehr, “Mimesis, Stilisierung, Fiktion in spätmittelalterlicher Porträtmalerei. Das sog. Gothaer Liebespaar,” *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 25, 1998, pp. 79–104; J. Heinzelmann, “Das ‘Gothaer Liebespaar’ ist ein Liebespaar,” *Archiv für hessische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 57, 1999, pp. 206–236; B. Kratz, “‘Unbyllich het sye eß gedan’. Die Inschrift des ‘Gothaer Liebespaar’-Gemäldes,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63, 2000, pp. 120–132; B. Welzel, “Sichtbare Herrschaft – Paradigmen höfischer Kunst,” in: *Principes. Dynastien und Höfe im späten Mittelalter*, ed. C. Nolte, K.-H. Spieß, Stuttgart 2002, pp. 87–106; D. Hess, “Das Gothaer Liebespaar. Dokument einer Messalliance? Hinweis auf eine andere Geliebte? Zu den Spruchbandversen des Gothaer Bildes,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 138, 2009, pp. 214–220; M. Schedl, *Tafelmalerei der Spätgotik am südlichen Mittelrhein*, Mainz 2016, pp. 210–220 and cat. no. 39; M. Büchsel, “Das ‘Gothaer Liebespaar’ oder ‘Theseus und Ariadne,’” in: *Kunsttransfer und Formgenese in der Kunst am Mittelrhein, 1400–1500*, Berlin 2019, pp. 237–254. For the Housebook Master – see note 266.

children. He was supposed to order the painting in 1484, at the time when, he went on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land together with his cousin Ludwig von Hanau-Babenhausen. This identification is based on the recognition of the coat-of-arms as the symbol of the county of Hanau. On the other hand, the youthful appearance of the man does not correspond with the age of the count, who was 36 at that time (the count went on a second pilgrimage in 1491, and perhaps the painting dates from that period). The morganatic nature of the relationship seems to be confirmed by the mobcap (*Haube*) worn by the woman – a type of bonnet that is typical for the middle class. The so-called *Schnürlein* – a woven tassel at the end of the shawl, which she places on the finger of her beloved – corresponds to the wedding ring, which could not legitimately be included in the picture. Such a substitution had its roots in the Bible. In the Book of Numbers (15:38–39), God tells Moses to show the faithfulness of the Israelites through that very symbol: “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the Lord’ [...]”

Fifteenth-century paintings and prints often show illegible texts written on sheets of papers, scrolls or on an open book held by the Virgin. The letters are only lines or dots, marking the inscriptions, but without any true meaning. Frequently we know which words should be inscribed in these places, but we do not actually see them. In the *Annunciation* by Jost Haller from the mid-fifteenth century (Basel, Kunstmuseum)⁴³² [fig. 510], it is fairly obvious that the open book, though the text is illegible, shows either the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the birth of Christ: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14), or the protoevangelion from the book of Genesis: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” (Genesis 3: 15). In turn, the angel-messenger takes a letter to the Virgin, folded so that the viewer cannot see the text of the Angelic Salutation: *Ave Maria, gratia plena, etc.* The hidden or absent text forces the beholder to pause and think about the missing words. It activates the viewer and stimulates the attention required for the subsequent examination of the painting.

432 Jost Haller’s *Annunciation: Spätmittelalter am Oberrhein*, vol. II: *Meister und Werkstätten 1450–1525*, exh. cat., Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe, Ostfildern 2001, cat. no. 41; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 128 (with previous bibliography).

Unwritten texts also appeared in scenes that illustrated narratives, which brought forth ritualized words from the memories of the beholders, such as the text of prayers. The prayer *Angelus Domini* was a text evoked in this manner in scenes of the Annunciation. Dating from the thirteenth century, it was based on the Gospel of St. Luke (1:28 and 42), and the *Angelic Salutation*:

V: Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ. R: Et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae

V: Ecce Ancilla Domini. R: Fiat mihi secundum Verbum tuum.

Ave Maria...

V: Et Verbum caro factum est. R: Et habitavit in nobis.

Ave Maria...

V: Ora pro nobis, Sancta Dei Genetrix. R: Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus: Gratiam tuam quæsumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde; ut qui, angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui Incarnationem cognovimus, per passionem eius et crucem, ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

(V: The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary. R: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

V: Behold the handmaid of the Lord. R: Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary...

V: And the Word was made Flesh. R: And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

V: Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, R: that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that, we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord.)

The narrative of the prayer unfolds in various stages that correspond to the verses from the Gospel of St. Luke. The first is *conturbatio*, or the disquiet of the Virgin at the angel's words: *Ave Maria, gratia plena*, "‘Hail Mary, full of grace,’" seen in "She was troubled at his saying ..." from Luke 1: 29. The next stage is *cogitatio* – reflection – after the words *Dominus tecum* – "‘the Lord is with Thee’." Initially, the Virgin cannot grasp the meaning of the salutation, "...and wondered what kind of greeting this might be." (Luke 1: 29). The prayer continues with the angel reassuring her by saying: "...blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb...," a

paraphrase of the Biblical text: “But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son...’” (Luke 1: 30–31). Next comes *interrogatio*, or inquiry: “‘How will this be,’ Mary asked the angel, ‘since I am a virgin?’” (Luke 1:34), to which he answers: “The Holy Spirit will come on you...” (Luke 1:35). The final stage is *humilitatio*, or submission: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord ...” (Luke 1: 38), and then *meritatio* – merit because of her obedience to God’s will.

Many Netherlandish and German paintings, with or without the text in the scrolls, reflect the stages of the dialogue between the archangel and the Virgin. The Netherlandish *Annunciations* that show the Virgin reading a book, and unaware of the angel’s presence, (for instance, the *Mérode Altarpiece*) [fig. 330], depict the moment of salutation before the *conturbatio*. Engravings by Master E.S. (L.8–13) and Martin Schongauer (L.1) illustrate the situation of a sudden surprise – *conturbatio* – with the angel appearing behind the Virgin, interrupting her prayer or reading [figs. 505–506]. The paintings of the *Annunciation* that refer to the *conturbatio*, *cogitatio* and *interrogatio* (disquiet, reflection and inquiry) feature the Virgin with her arms raised and spread, facing the angel and speaking (e.g. painting by Konrad Witz at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg; the panels of the closed *Three Magi Altarpiece* by Stefan Lochner in Cologne; *The Annunciation from Washington* by Jan van Eyck [fig. 478]; the central panel of the Paris-Turin *Triptych of the Annunciation*, and the wing of *Saint Columba Altarpiece* by Rogier van der Weyden in Munich [fig. 551]). In turn, those which include the Virgin kneeling with hands folded across her chest depict *humilitatio*, or submission (for instance, the closed *Ghent Altarpiece* [fig. 28], or the wing of the *Altarpiece of the Life of the Virgin* by the Master of the Lyversberg Passion in the Church of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows in Linz). Such images, without scrolls, force the viewer to read them, and to augment them with text(s) that exist outside them, but which constitute their real meaning.

At times the images included only fragments of a text, and the viewer had to guess their full meaning. The *Annunciation* by Master Georg (from Cracow, named in archival sources as “Georgius pictor”), which is painted and dated 1517, once formed the central panel of the triptych from St. Michael’s church on Wawel Hill in Cracow (now Czartoryski Museum, Cracow)⁴³³ [fig. 511]. The ornamental stole of the angel includes text adapted

433 K. Kuczman, K. Stangrett, “Skrzydła ołtarza w krakowskim kościele Św. Krzyża a obraz ‘Zwiastowanie’ Malarza Jerzego w Muzeum Narodowym w Krakowie,” *Folia Historiae Artium* 10, 1974, pp. 107–116; J. Gadomski, *Gotyckie malarstwo tablicowe w Małopolsce 1500–1540*, Warsaw–Cracow 1995, pp. 87–89; *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce*, ed. by A.S. Labuda, K. Secomska et al., 2 vols. (vol. I: *Synteza*, vol. II: *Katalog zabytków*), Warsaw 2004, vol. I, pp. 197–199; W. Marcinkowski in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 276.

from the Trisagion – a hymn chanted on Good Friday: *Sancte Deus, Sancte for[tis immor]talis, miser[ere nobis S]ancta Trinitas*. The letters are visible, but not all; the illusion of depth in the stole forced the artist to hide some letters that should be written on sections of the swirling cloth. The faithful had to focus their gaze and concentration to remind themselves of the words of the hymn, or to try and guess the missing parts based on what was visible. Sometimes, as in the *Madonna van der Paele* or *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin* by Jan van Eyck, we can see only a letter or one word. *Madonna van der Paele* [figs. 143, 475] depicts an open book, with an incipit O – the letter that begins the liturgy of the Virgin, *Obsecro* or *O Intemerata*. In the *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin* [fig. 512], a word inscribed on the rim of the Virgin's cloak reads “[e]levata,” which is absurdly isolated, given the context of Psalm 8, from which it comes (*Quoniam elevata est magnificentia tua, super coelos* – “You have set your glory above the heavens.”). However, its fragmented form draws the attention of the viewer. It allows the faithful to also link the word with the *elevatio* – the elevation of the host during the liturgy, and the transubstantiation – the turning of the bread into the body of Christ. Thus, the gesture of supporting the Christ Child by the enthroned Virgin is a reference to the Eucharistic sacrifice and to the blessed sacrament, which is the subject of the observation, meditation and prayer of the donor kneeling before the Virgin and Child. The faithful read these images, even though the texts included on their surface were not easy to decipher; the act of decoding the words provoked a careful examination of the image according to a deeper, sacramental meaning.

IV.4. Texts and inscriptions in Hebrew

Inscriptions in Hebrew constituted a separate category of texts depicted in fifteenth-century paintings. They are truly abundant beyond the standard inscription in the three classical languages of Hebrew, Greek and Latin traditionally found on the cross in the scenes of the Crucifixion. Gary Schwartz once calculated the number of such inscriptions on the objects included in the exhibition *Van Eyck to Dürer in Bruges* (2010–2011)⁴³⁴. From the two hundred and eighty-three objects on display, Hebrew letters were painted on twelve paintings (7.5 %), two drawings (4 %) and one manuscript illumination. There were no examples of these letters in prints.

In general, they are examples of pseudo-Hebrew writing – the ornamental use of stylized quasi-letters, which are not accurate. Frequently they are

434 *The Schwartzlist*, 309 *Pseudo-Semitism*, <http://www.garyschwartzarthistorian.nl/schwartzlist/?id=158>.

just a motif, used to decorate the rims of cloaks or ornamental draperies. Only in isolated instances do the letters correspond to an actual text, or is their presence logically justified. The *Circumcision* by the Master of the Tucher Altarpiece (c. 1440–1450, Aachen, Suermond-Ludwig-Museum)⁴³⁵ [fig. 513] includes two sequences of the Hebrew alphabet: from *aleph* to *chet* and from *saf* to the final *peh*. Clearly the painter must have used a manuscript with a written version of the alphabet from which he copied the letters.



Fig. 513: Master of the Tucher Altarpiece, *The Circumcision*, c. 1440–1450, Aachen, Suermond-Ludwig-Museum

435 T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 205.



Fig. 514: Southern German Master, *Ecce homo*, early 16th c., Warsaw, National Museum

Fifteenth-century paintings included copied letters of the Hebrew alphabet or their stylized versions, which served almost a purely ornamental purpose. At times Hebrew letters were used to write Latin or Greek words, as the Hebrew words were extremely rare in paintings⁴³⁶ (we find both forms in works by Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hans Holbein the Elder and Albrecht Dürer).⁴³⁷

The use of the Hebrew writing in art does not seem to point to the widespread Anti-Judaism, the predecessor of the antisemitism, nor to the Philo-Judaism, that developed at the end of the fifteenth and throughout the sixteenth century in humanist circles and in the milieu

436 A. Ronen, "Iscrizioni ebraiche nell'arte italiana del Quattrocento," in: *Studi di storia dell'arte sul medioevo e il rinascimento. Atti del Convegno internazionale Arezzo-Firenze 1989*, Firenze 1992, vol. II, pp. 601–624; G.B. Sarfatti, "Hebrew Script in Western Visual Arts," *Italia: studi e ricerche sulla storia, la cultura e la letteratura degli Ebrei d'Italia* 13–15, 2001, pp. 451–547, and "Addenda," *Italia...* 16, 2004, pp. 135–156. A. Kappeler, "Altarretabel – ein Instrument zur Judenmissionierung? Hebräische und hebraisierende Inschriften auf mittelalterlichen Retabeln in Hessen," in: *Mittelalterliche Retabel in Hessen*, vol. 1: *Bildsprache, Bildgestalt, Bildgebrauch*, ed. by U. Schütte, H. Locher, K. Niehr, J. Sander, X. Stolzenburg, Petersberg 2019, pp. 134–171.

437 T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, passim.

of some Reformers. It is notable that the Hebrew and pseudo-Hebrew letters do not appear in representations of the Mocking of Christ. Only in paintings of the Ecce Homo are the figures of the hostile Jews characterised by quasi-Hebrew inscriptions, but the cry *crucifige eum* – “Crucify him!” – is written in Latin [fig. 514]. However, the approach to Jews, both Biblical and contemporary, is somehow implied in these paintings. The Hebrew or pseudo-Hebrew letters refer to the oriental, ancient, Biblical past and allowed artists to mark the depicted figures and spaces as being from the Old Testament, thereby evoking a certain aura of distant ‘picturesqueness’. On the other hand, the unfamiliar quality of the text distances the Christian past and present from the Jewish world and stigmatizes it as something foreign. The instrumental use of the Hebrew alphabet – ignoring its meaning and any inaccuracies of its transcription – marked Biblical and historic Jews as objects (outcasts to be separated from society) and not subjects of history.

IV.5. Text-Image Panels – paintings to be read

The Late Medieval didacts needed large and clear images that combined visual and textual messages. German and Netherlandish artists devised a type of panel painting that combined the text and image (Schrift-Bild-Tafel), or, as suggested by Ruth Slenczka, a didactic panel (lehrhafte Bildtafel).⁴³⁸ The formula explores the ancient, patristic tradition of Gregory the Great, and his concept of the image as a didactic tool for instructing illiterate believers (in particular) about the sacred history and tenets of the Christian faith. This concept informed various theories about images throughout the Middle Ages. During the Carolingian era the writings of Hrabanus Maurus, Alcuin and the so-called *Libri carolini* defined images as books; they assisted the memory, and acted as tools of practical teaching (prodesse). In the twelfth century, the monastic school at St. Victor, Paris, and primarily St. Hugh of St. Victor, created a metaphor of the world as a book, noting the parallelism of text and image.

438 **Text and Image Panels in the Late Middle Ages:** R. Slenczka, *Lehrhafte Bildtafeln in spätmittelalterlichen Kirchen*, Cologne–Weimar–Vienna 1998. For more on this type of paintings see: H. Boockmann, “Wort und Bild in der Frömmigkeit des späteren Mittelalters,” *Pirckheimer-Jahrbuch* 1, 1985 (1986), pp. 9–40; his, “Belehrung durch Bilder? Ein unbekannter Typus spätmittelalterlicher Tafelbilder,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 57, 1994, pp. 1–22.



Fig. 515: Northern German Master, active in Danzig/Gdańsk, *Ten Commandments Panel* in the Our Lady Church in Danzig/Gdańsk, c. 1480–1490, Warsaw, National Museum, on long-term loan to the Our Lady Church in Gdańsk



Fig. 516: *Ten Commandments Panel* in its original location in the Our Lady Church in Danzig/Gdańsk

There were different categories of panels that combined text and image. The first Panels of the Absolution of Sins assisted during confession and penitence (*Beichttafeln*). These included the Panels of the Ten Commandments and the related Panels of the Virtues and Vices, displayed in the context of the Last Judgment. This category includes also the Panels of Indulgences (*Ablaßtafeln*), which celebrated the granting of indulgences (*indulgentia*).⁴³⁹ The second category includes the “Pilgrim Panels,” which celebrated miraculous locations, relics and images (*Pilgertafeln*); the third, the “Panels of Lives” (*Lebenstafeln*), narrate the lives of Christ and the Virgin, together with hagiographic legends of saints. To the fourth category belonged panels that conveyed doctrinal or allegorical messages, for instance about the perpetual virginity of Mary or the mysteries of the rosary, which formed at the same time the “Panels of Prayers,” providing a text and image for a specific prayer (*Andachtstafeln*).

An example of *Ablaßtafeln* – a diptych with indulgences from Bischofshofen, and an example of *Andachtstafeln* – the *Corona Beatissimae*

⁴³⁹ A.M. Morris, “Art and Advertising: Late Medieval Altarpieces in Germany,” in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. I, pp. 325–345, especially pp. 329–332.

Virginis Mariae from Breslau – have already been discussed. Therefore, it is important to discuss other examples of didactic panels.

A typical example of Beichttafel is the *Ten Commandments Panel* from Gdańsk, a work of a local master, from northern Germany, dated c.1480–1490 (298 × 225cm; National Museum in Warsaw, deposited in the Church of Our Lady in Gdańsk).⁴⁴⁰ [fig. 515] It includes ten panels illustrating the Decalogue. Their sequence needs to be read from left to right, from the top to the bottom. Each panel is divided into two scenes: to the left a positive exemplum – a deed in accordance with the commandment, committed in an angel’s presence, and to the right a negative exemplum, an action that is against the principles outlined in the Decalogue, inspired by a devil. Both the angel and the devil speak to the faithful in words inscribed on scrolls. For instance, in the illustration to the third commandment we read the angels’ words: “Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy” (“Du salt feyren den heyligen tagk”), and the devil’s temptation: “Drink, dance and play as you please, come what may” (“Trinck tancze spele gehabe dich wol Is kommet do is czu kommen sal”). Some scenes include Biblical narratives (I: The First Commandment: Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law and The Dance Around the Golden Calf; VIII: Susanna Accused by the Elders; IX: David and Bathsheba), but other depict scenes of everyday life. The source for the images and inscriptions is the woodcut version of the decalogue from a book dated 1455–1458 (Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Palat. Germ. 438). The frame’s mouldings include the text of the Commandments written in Gothic minuscule. The panel hung on the north-west pillar of the Church of Our Lady in Gdańsk, quite high up, but not too high to allow the inscriptions to be read, and to be used by the preacher when giving moral admonitions [fig. 516]. The panel was intended to be read by simple folk, hence its simple and straightforward text written in German; there is only one Latin phrase, next to Christ in the image of the First

440 *Ten Commandments Panel from Gdańsk*: A.S. Labuda, *Malarstwo tablicowe w Gdańsku w 2. poł. XV wieku*, Warsaw 1979, no. 15, pp. 206–209, 252 ff.; his, “Cnota i grzech w gdańskiej Tablicy Dziesięciorga Przykazań, czyli jak rzeczywistość przedstawienia obrazowego s(po)tyka się z rzeczywistością miasta późnośredniowiecznego,” *Artium quaestiones* 7, 1995, pp. 65–102; his, “La Table des dix Commandements de Gdansk. La didactique par l’image: entre les représentations schématiques et réalistes,” in: *Le rôle des médias à travers l’histoire. Actes du VIIIe Colloque Poznań–Strasbourg 12–14 mai 1994*, ed. by M. Serwanski, Poznań 1995, pp. 85–104; see also *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce*, vol. I, pp. 351–352, vol. II, pp. 170–171; his, “Kleidung als Bedeutungsträger. Zur Zehn-Gebote-Tafel aus der Marienkirche in Danzig,” in: *Bild/Geschichte. Festschrift für Horst Bredekamp*, ed. Ph. Helas, M. Polte, C. Rückert, B. Uppenkamp, Berlin 2007, pp. 413–430; his, *Die Tafelmalerei in Danzig in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 2015, no. 15; *The Ten Commandments in Medieval and Early Modern culture*, ed. by Y. Desplenter, J. Pieters, W. Melion, Leiden – Boston 2017.

Commandment, which reads: *Ego sum via et veritas et vita* (“I am the way and the truth and the life.” John 14:6) – one of the most basic and comprehensible quotes from the Gospel.

Ten Commandments Panels such as this were quite common and surviving examples include the triptych from the Corpus Christi chapel in Göttingen (c. 1410, Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum); the panel from the Benediktbeuren convent (c. 1500, with additions dating to the second half of the sixteenth century); the triptych from Sankt Georg’s church in Dinkelsbühl (early sixteenth century), and the panel by Lucas Cranach the Elder from the town hall in Wittenberg (1516, Wittenberg, Lutherhaus).



Fig. 517: Workshop of the Master of Langendorf/Wielowieś, *Triptych of St. Hedwig* from the church of the Holy Spirit (?) in Breslau/Wrocław, c. 1440, Warsaw, National Museum – surviving wings

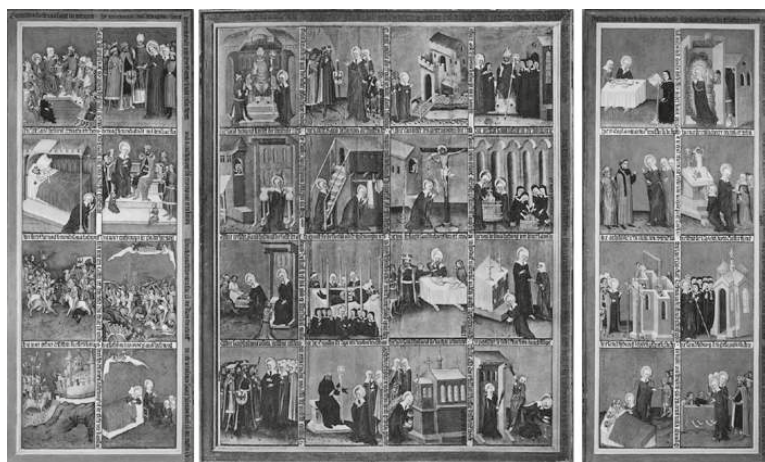


Fig. 518: Workshop of the Master of Langendorf/Wielowieś, *Triptych of St. Hedwig*, image of the entire altarpiece with the now lost central panel, archival photo

The monumental *Triptych of St. Hedwig* at the National Museum in Warsaw belongs to the popular genre of multi-panel works showing the lives of saints, which are also inscribed with various texts. The triptych is said to have been displayed in the church of the Holy Spirit in Breslau, executed in c. 1430–1440 by a local workshop (probably the workshop of the Master of the *Triptych from Langendorf/Wielowieś*) [figs. 517–518].⁴⁴¹ Only sixteen panels from the avers of the wings survived, but originally the painting included in its central panel (dispersed during the Second World War) and on the reverse of the wings (destroyed earlier in unknown circumstances) sixty-four scenes from the legend of St. Hedwig. Called Hedwig von Andechs-Meran (1179–1243), she descended from the Bavarian Andechs family and the dukes of Merania; by marriage to Henry I the Duke of Breslau (known as ‘the Bearded’), she became duchess of Silesia and the mother of Henry II

441 *Triptych of St. Hedwig from Wrocław: Herzöge und Heilige. Das Geschlecht der Andechs-Meranier im europäischen Hochmittelalter*, ed. by J. Kirmeier, exh. cat., Kloster Andechs 1993, Regensburg 1993; J. Kostowski, “Das Breslauer Triptychon der Hedwigslegende. Herkunft und Ikonographie,” in: *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. by E. Grunewald, N. Gussone, Munich 1996, pp. 159–181; M. Kochanowska-Reiche, in: *Schlesien. Die Perle in der Krone Böhmens. Drei Blütezeiten der gegenseitigen Kunstbeziehungen*, ed. by A. Niedzielenko, V. Vlnas et al., exh. cat. Národní galerie, Valdštejnská Jízdárna, Prague – Akademia Rycerska, Legnica, Prague 2006, cat. no. I.5.1 (with previous bibliography); M. Kochanowska, “Legend of Saint Hedwig, wings of a triptych,” in: *The Gallery of Medieval Art...*, no. 1.20.

the Pious, who was killed by Mongols in the Battle of Liegnitz. The triptych told the story of this holy patron of Silesia, canonized in 1267, who was a close relative of St. Elisabeth of Hungary and St. Agnes of Bohemia. The narrative begins with scenes on the left wing that include the family of the duchess, her marriage to Henry I the Bearded, prayer in the bedchamber, Hedwig with her children, the story of the Battle of Liegnitz and the death of her son Henry the Pious. The central panel depicts her pious deeds, which testify to her purity, devotion to God, humility, chastity and her performance of miracles. The narrative continues on the right wing: Hedwig is shown in prayer, and her generous donations to the church and acts of mercy are enumerated. The themes and their iconography were adopted from the miniatures of the so-called Hedwig Codex –the life of St. Hedwig (*Vita beatae Hedwigis*), commissioned by her uncle Louis I of Brieg in 1353 (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. Ludwig XI.7).⁴⁴²

The long sequence of scenes divided into rows, to be read from the left wing, through the central panel to the right wing, is accompanied by German inscriptions in miniscule. They explain every image and provide a nearly complete story of the saint (apart from the destroyed averse of the wings). “[Here] the Duke of Merania Berthold IV, the father of St. Hedwig, and his wife Agnes of Wettin with their children. Here Hedwig married Henry the Bearded, the Duke of Silesia. Here St. Hedwig prays whilst her husband Henry the Bearded sleeps. Duke Henry with St. Hedwig and their children. Here Prince Henry, son of St. Hedwig, fights against Mongols. [...] Here Prince Henry, son of St. Hedwig, is decapitated by Mongols and his soul ascends [into heaven]. Here the severed head of Prince Henry, son of St. Hedwig, is brought on a spike to the castle in Liegnitz. Here St. Hedwig sees in her sleep the soul of her son being carried by the angels to heaven [the next inscription in the central panel is missing; after it follows:] Here St. Hedwig listens reverently to the holy words and forgets about a morsel of food she holds in her hand. Here St. Hedwig is surrounded by heavenly light whilst in prayer. Here a chaplain Marinus lies to her and brings a friar instead of a priest (to celebrate a mass). Here she prays before holy images, which she owned, in particular to the image of the Virgin, with which she comforted the sick. Here she asks her husband to pay for the Cistercian convent at Trzebnica. Here she staffed the convent with nuns from Bamberg. Here St. Hedwig personally visits the sick and blesses them and gives generous alms to the poor. Here she gives candles and other goods to prisoners, and saves people from capital punishment.”⁴⁴³ Through texts and images this detailed narrative glorifies Hedwig and the reigning family

442 See note 500.

443 Translation by Zuzanna Sarnecka (based on the Polish translation of the original text by Małgorzata Kochanowska).

of Silesian dukes. It proclaims the holy history of Silesia, provides an example of religious piety, and warns against the threat of the infidels, the Mongols, perhaps linking it to the contemporary threat posed by the Hussites during the Hussite Wars of in the 1420s and 30s (as suggested by Jakub Kostowski).⁴⁴⁴

The large triptych dated 1489 was a part of the pilgrim piety, as a *Pilgertafel*. It depicted twenty-four scenes related to the history of the relic of the Holy Blood preserved in the Weingarten monastery (now Stuttgart, Landesmuseum; 130 × 205cm) [fig. 519].⁴⁴⁵ Under each scene there is an extensive text written in vernacular German. These texts are not merely commentaries on the images, but they narrate the missing episodes that happened in between the scenes depicted in the panels. The narrative in these images and texts runs from left to right, according to the standard direction of reading. The text is linked to the image with the first word: Hie (here), which begins the description of the event and directs the viewer's attention to the image above.



Fig. 519: Swabian Master, *Triptych of the Holy Blood* from Weingarten Abbey, 1489, Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum

444 J. Kostowski, “Wrocławski tryptyk z ‘Legendą św. Jadwigi’. Pochodzenie i ikonografia,” in: *Księga jądwiżañska. Materiały międzynarodowego sympozjum naukowego: Święta Jadwiga w dziejach i kulturze Śląska. Wrocław – Trzebnica 21–23.9.1993*, Wrocław 1995, pp. 322–337.

445 *Triptych with the story of the relics of the Holy Blood from Weingarten*: R. Slenczka, *Lehrhafte Bildtafeln...*, cat. no. III.3 (with previous bibliography). Cf. R. Schaubode, “Hoftafeln. Zur Heilig-Blut- und Heiligen-Verehrung im Gebiet des ehem. Reichsstifts Weingarten,” in: *900 Jahre Heilig-Blut-Verehrung in Weingarten, 1094–1994. Festschrift zum Heilig-Blut-Jubiläum am 12. März 1994*, ed. by N. Kruse, H.U. Rudolf, vol. 2, Sigmaringen 1994, pp. 685–698.



Fig. 520: Swabian Master, *Triptych of the Holy Blood* from Weingarten Abbey – wings with the founders of the abbey, Welf IV and Judith of Flanders

The top row of the panels informs the beholder about the origins of the relic, collected at the foot of the cross and hidden by St. Longinus, a Roman soldier, whose life we see next. This is followed by the scenes in the second row, which depict the story of the relic, discovered in Rome and brought to Mantua; finally in the panels of the third row the viewer observes and reads the story of its translation (*translatio*) to Weingarten in 1091 by Judith, daughter of Baldwin IV of Flanders, the wife of Welf IV, Duke of Bavaria (the couple is portrayed on the versos of the wings, as idealised patrons) [fig. 520].

The aim of the written and illustrated narrative was to tie the relics closer to Weingarten and to promote a pilgrimage cult in its specific location. This was very necessary, as the cult of the Holy Blood was highly controversial. Unlike the Franciscans, the Dominicans questioned whether God the Father would have permitted the precious, Eucharistic blood of Christ to fall down onto the earth in drops during the Crucifixion. The holiness of the original relic in Mantua was rejected by the Dominican cardinal Johannes de Turrecremata. In turn, Franciscus de Savona, a Franciscan friar, and the future Pope Sixtus IV, defended the belief in his *Tractatus de sanguine Christi* published in Nuremberg in 1473. In 1405, Jan Hus was already protesting against the cult of the Holy Blood and related miracles, acting against the cult of the bleeding hosts from the church in Wilsnack, Brandenburg. The monastery of Weingarten was invested in the fight to legitimise the relics: in 1411,

a friar named Johannes Bosch was sent to Mantua to collect testimonies so as to confirm the discovery of the Blood and the circumstances surrounding the translation of the fragment of the relic to Weingarten. The triptych, which was commissioned after the consecration of the church and the monastery (renovated in 1487 following a fire in 1477 during the abbacy of Caspar Schiegg), became a tool in the process of legitimizing the relic. As such, it had to show the history of the relic in a clear and comprehensible manner, hence the text in the vernacular, and the combination of text and image.

IV.6. The direction of reading and viewing

In narrative compositions the sequence of images followed the direction of reading from left to right. In large-scale altarpieces, the direction was linked to the vertical viewing of the scenes. There were also other more complicated ways of composing narrative scenes.

It is sometimes difficult to retrieve the original mode of reading fifteenth-century altarpieces. Over the centuries they were frequently dismantled, installed in new frames (not always according to their original design), with many panels becoming isolated from their original larger whole. In general, the narrative of the scenes in the panels dictates their sequence, as in the Altarpiece from Schottenstift, attributed to Johannes Siebenbürger (1469, Vienna, Museum im Schottenstift, and the panel with the Descent from the Cross in Österreichische Galerie, Belvedere) [figs. 521–522].⁴⁴⁶ The closed altarpiece shows the Christological cycle, from the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem to the Lamentation under the Cross, with scenes divided in two rows that should be read from the top, from left to right. All panels depict a continuous narration, without taking into account the division into side wings and central panel. The same rule is followed in the open altarpiece with the Marian cycle. The viewer is invited to look at the altarpiece as if reading a page from a book, from top to bottom and from the left margin to the right. In the first and the last scene of the Christological cycle, a figure or a group of figures block the very edge of the panel, echoing the way

446 *Altarpiece from Schottenstift*: C. Reiter, “Der Wiener Schottenaltar. Geschichte, Stil und Charakteristika seiner Bildsprache,” in: *Museum im Schottenstift. Kunstsammlungen der Benediktinerabtei zu den Schotten in Wien*, Vienna 1994, pp. 173–190; K. Dünser, *Der Wiener Schottenaltar. Überlegungen zu Funktion und Gebrauch eines spätgotischen Hochaltarretabels*, Vienna 2004; A. Saliger, *Der Wiener Schottenaltar*, Vienna 2005; his, *Der Wiener Schottenmeister*, Munich–Berlin–London–New York 2005; A. Ebert, *Der Wiener Schottenaltar. Das ehemalige Hochaltar-Retabel des Schottenstifts zu Wien*, Weimar 2015. See also R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, chapter II.11: *Johannes Siebenbürger, ein Wiener Schüler Pleydenwurffs* (the Schotten-Master identified as Johannes Siebenbürger).

in which the incipit and explicit frame the written text. In the Altarpiece of Hamburg Cathedral by Absolon Stumme (1499, Warsaw, National Museum), the panels of the Marian cycle, visible when the wings are shut, are viewed in two continuous rows, and the sequence is framed with the introductory and concluding panels (incipit and explicit): allegorical images of the Tree of Jesse and the Lady of Sorrows with her heart pierced with swords [fig. 523].⁴⁴⁷ However, this is not the only possible reading.



Fig. 521: Master of the Altarpiece from Schottenstift, *Altarpiece from Schottenstift*, 1469, Vienna, Museum im Schottenstift – closed



Fig. 522: Master of the Altarpiece from Schottenstift, *Altarpiece from Schottenstift*, 1469, Vienna, Museum im Schottenstift – open

447 *Altarpiece of the Hamburg Cathedral by Absolon Stumme*: A. Röder, “Die Ikonographie des Marienlebens auf den Flügeln des Hochaltars aus dem Hamburger Dom,” in: *Die vier Flügel des Hochaltars aus dem Hamburger Dom*, Berichte aus der Restaurierungswerkstatt St. Jacobi 1, ed. by M. Doose, E. Giluń, J. Knörle, V. Konerding, Hamburg 2001, pp. 43–53. On Absolon Stumme, the history of the altarpiece, its original form and the conservation – see other essays in the volume, in particular V. Plagemann, *Absolon Stumme. Der Künstler des Hauptaltars aus dem Hamburger Dom*, pp. 18–27. See also J. Aniolek, “Wings of the Hamburg Altarpiece (Polyptych from Hamburg Cathedral), 1499,” in: *The Gallery of Medieval Art...*, no. IV.5.



Fig. 523: Absolon Stumme, *Altarpiece of Hamburg Cathedral*, 1499, Warsaw, National Museum – view with the internal wings closed

In 2009, Robert Suckale listed the types of narrative and the directions of reading in relation to multipanel German altarpieces, and gave them metaphorical names: “the ceremonial order,” “procession in leaps” or “jumping procession;” “sequence of rows as a time sequence,” “Heavenly Jerusalem,” “stairway to Heaven,” “message from Heaven,” “reading cycles,” “in the opposite direction: reading from right to left,” “clockwise reading,” “anti-clockwise reading,” and “boustrophedon” (*Zeremonialordnung*, *Springprozession*, *Zeilenfolge als Zeitenfolge*, *Das Himmlische Jerusalem*, *Himmelstreppe*, *Himmelsbotschaft*, *Lese-Zyklus*, *Im Gegensatz: Die Leseweise von rechts nach links*, *Die Uhr*, *Gegen die Uhr*, *Das Boustrophedon*).⁴⁴⁸ These are very useful categorisations.

The first categories relate to the tri-panel triptychs (that is, with wings painted with a single image). The “ceremonial order” category encourages a viewing of the central image and subsequently of the two lateral scenes, first the one on the left and then the one on the right. The “procession in leaps” category defines the category in which the first chronological scene is depicted on the left wing, the second one is on the right wing and the final in the central panel; to follow the “procession of scenes” the viewer needs to jump over the central panel, and return to it at the very end. This mode of viewing is required by the Bavarian or Austrian small *Passion Triptych* in silver and gold in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (c. 1430) [fig.160]⁴⁴⁹ where from the left there is a sequence of the Road to Calvary, the Crucifixion and – achronologically – Christ Stripped of His Garments. In a similar fashion, an

448 R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, chapter VIII.2: *Die Leseweise von Bildernzyklen auf Retabeln*. See also his, *Das mittelalterliche Bild als Zeitzeuge. Sechs Studien*, Berlin 2002 and his, ‘Süddeutsche szenische Tafelbilder um 1420–1450. Erzählung im Spannungsfeld zwischen Kult- und Andachtsbild,’ in: his, *Stil und Funktion. Ausgewählte Schriften zur Kunst des Mittelalters*, Munich 2003, pp. 59–85.

449 See note 101.

achronological narrative is included in the *Triptych of the Apostles* c.1465, from the chapel of St. Margaret in the castle at Nuremberg (the central panel is now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich; the side panels in the Burgkapelle, Nuremberg)⁴⁵⁰ [fig. 524]. In its left wing, there is firstly a scene of Pentecost, then in the centre the scene of the Great Commission, and finally, in the right wing, the Dormition of the Virgin; the central panel may be read in various directions at once, following the movements of the Apostles. Such arrangement of the panels was motivated by the need to place in the center a scene related to the dedication of the chapel or the altar. An anachronistic order frequently appears in a single panel, as in the *Crucifixion of the Wasservass Family* c. 1430 in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne [fig. 525]. The altarpiece is examined – achronologically again – from the centre, with the view of the three crosses on Golgotha and the group of the mourning Virgin, John and witnesses; we then follow, as in a procession, the sequence of scenes at the bottom, from left to right: from the Carrying of the Cross to the Crucifixion. The chronological narrative begins at the bottom from the left to the right edge of the painting, where it turns and ends in the central scene.



Fig. 524: *Triptych of the Apostles* from the chapel of St. Margaret in the castle in Nuremberg c. 1465, central panel in Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek; side panels in Nuremberg, Burgkapelle

450 R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, chapter II.10: *Neue Tendenzen in den 1460er Jahren. Das Triptychon des Apostelabschieds*, and cat. no. 30.



Fig. 525: Master from Cologne, *Crucifixion of the Wasservass Family*, c. 1430, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum



Fig. 526: Austrian Master (Vienna), *The Znam Altarpiece*, c. 1440–1450, Vienna, Belvedere, Sammlung Mittelalter

The “sequence of rows as a time sequence” is a somehow inaccurate name for the category, because what is at stake is the sequence of panels that follows the rows. The scenes depicted in specific rows follow the chronology of the narrative. It is the most common arrangement of panels in triptychs, with panels narrating the story one by one, from left to right; with the central part typically wider than the side panels. A Viennese sculptor of the *Znam Altarpiece* c. 1440–1450 (2.55 × 5.22m; Vienna, Österreichische

Galerie, Belvedere) follows this arrangement [fig. 526].⁴⁵¹ The open altarpiece shows the most common sequence of the Passion altarpieces with the Road to Calvary, the Crucifixion and the Descent from the Cross. The narrative that corresponds with the direction of reading, running across the panels, from left to right, is the most common arrangement in the triptychs by the Old Masters (for instance, the *Saint Columba Altarpiece* by Rogier van der Weyden in Munich, Alte Pinakothek, with the scenes of the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple [fig. 551]) and in other larger structures.

According to Suckale, the “Heavenly Jerusalem” is a hierarchical arrangement with individual figures of saints flanking the central part of elaborate altarpieces; rows at the top include figures that are more important than those depicted in the lower sections, and the whole is dominated by its central scene. The depiction lacks narrative, as in other categories. In the “Stairway to Heaven,” the narrative runs from the bottom to the top, and in the “Message from Heaven” from the top to the bottom.

Multi-panel altarpieces are viewed row by row, from left to right, typically from top to bottom (Suckale: “Message from Heaven”). The sequence of viewing inspired by that of reading is also linked to the hierarchy top-bottom, heaven-earth. The scenes can be observed from one edge of the polyptych to another, in continuing rows of panels, from left to right, ignoring the division to side and central panels, as in the aforementioned *Altarpiece of Hamburg Cathedral* by Absolon Stumme, or in the *Altarpiece from Blaubeuren* by Bartholomäus Zeitblom and Bernhard Strigel (1493–1494, Blaubeuren, the monastery church) [figs. 296–298, 523].⁴⁵² The closed wings and the first view show the scenes from the Passion and from the life of St. John the Baptist, grouped in rows from left to right. The full view of the altarpiece presents the traditional hierarchical arrangement with the sculpted figures of the Virgin and saints in the shrine, carved by Michel and Gregor Erhart, who also made the reliefs on the single-panel wings (*The Nativity* and *The Adoration of the Magi*), complemented by Zeitblom’s

451 *Znaim (Znojmo) Altarpiece in Vienna*: A special issue of the *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 42, 1988, including essays by: R. Suckale, “Das Znaimer Retabel. Zur künstlerischen Herkunft des Bildschnitzers,” pp. 2–14; L. Schultes, “Zur Herkunft und kunstgeschichtlichen Stellung des Znaimer Altars,” pp. 14–37; M. Koller, G. Zehetmaier, “Kunsttechnologische Studien zum Znaimer Altar und anderen Werken des frühen Realismus in Österreich,” pp. 37–44; F. Mairinger, “Analytische Untersuchungen der Skulpturpolychromie des Znaimer Altars,” pp. 44–48. For the painter of the wings panels – Master of Frederick III (Friedrichs-Meister) see note 469.

452 See notes 447 and 185.

painted elements. At times, in multi-panel altarpieces, the rows of panels are read separately for each wing or each view. In these instances, the hieratic arrangement structures the central view, whilst in the wings the narrative is read from top to bottom. This arrangement occurs on the recto of the open wings of the *St. Mary Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss (with the “stairway to heaven” arrangement in the central part – see below) and in the open *Altarpiece of the Coronation of the Virgin* by Michael Pacher in Sankt Wolfgang (but with a horizontal direction right-left in the middle shrine; see chapter II.3).

Another arrangement includes scenes presenting the narrative from bottom to the top, towards the vault and thus towards Heaven. This is an anagogical mode of reading (inspirational, ascending) that corresponds to Suckale’s category of “stairway to Heaven.” The Master of Vyšší Brod (see chapter II.3) [fig. 108] shows a narrative – from the Annunciation to Pentecost – in rows that run in the standard reading direction, but not from top to bottom, as in a book, but from bottom to top, forcing the viewer to lift their gaze upwards to the vault and to Heaven. A main altarpiece, probably by Gabriel Angler, (c. 1444–1445) from the Tegernsee monastery, named in the sources as *tabula magna*, includes in the upper section of the central part a vast Crucifixion (Nuremberg, Germanisches Museum), and the Carrying of the Cross (preserved in a fragmentary state in Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum); the wings included four other Passion scenes.⁴⁵³ Both the central part, and the scenes on the wings were arranged according to the ascending order, to be read from the bottom upwards. In turn, the versos of the wings with the story of St. Quirinus, the patron of the monastery and the church, showed when closed the narrative of his life, to be read from top to bottom.

Other altarpieces presented more complicated arrangements. In the *St. Mary’s Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss [fig. 527–529], the narrative primarily develops in a vertical manner. In the central panel, the main sequence continues from the bottom to the top – from the Tree of Jesse in the predella, through the Dormition of the Virgin, the Assumption in the upper part and the Coronation in the crowning. The Christological cycle depicted on the open wings unravels from the top to the bottom: to the left, in the column with panels depicting the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Shepherds and the Adoration of the Magi, and on the right the scenes of the Resurrection, the Ascension and Pentecost.

453 V. Liedke, “Die Münchner Tafelmalerei und Schnitzkunst der Spätgotik, II: Vom Pestjahr 1430 bis zum Tod Ulrich Neunhausers 1472,” *Ars Bavarica* 29/30, 1982, pp. 1–34; H. Möhring, *Die Tegernseer Altarretabel des Gabriel Angler und die Münchner Malerei von 1430–1450*, München 1997; R. Suckale, *Süddeutsche szenische Tafelbilder um 1420–1450...*; *Alte Pinakothek – Altdeutsche und altniederländische Malerei*, (Katalog der ausgestellten Gemälde 2), ed. by M. Schawe, Ostfildern 2006, s.v. *Gabriel Angler*.



Fig. 527: Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece*, 1477–1489, Cracow, Our Lady Church – closed altarpiece



Fig. 528: Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece* – open

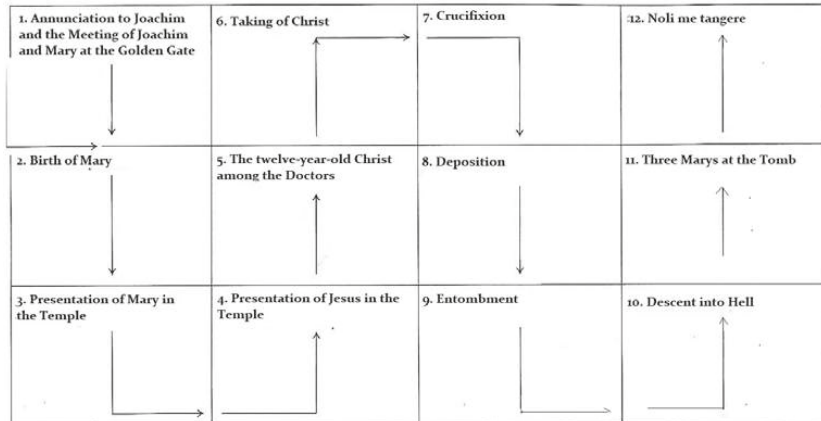
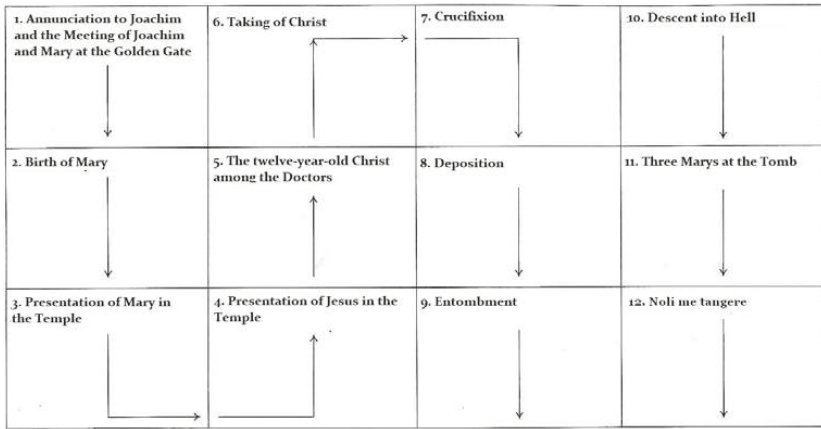


Fig. 529: Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece* – closed, two modes of the direction of the narrative

Yet another, third, mode of reading appears with the wings shut. The sequence alternates and develops from the top to bottom, then conversely from the bottom to the top. First in the column of panels on the far left, the narrative starts from the top and descends through The Meeting at the Golden Gate, The Birth of the Virgin, finishing at The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. Next, in the internal left column the narrative continues upwards: The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Christ among the Doctors, and the Arrest of Christ. Subsequently, in the right internal column, the narrative descends from top to bottom: the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, and the Entombment. Finally, in the far right column again the narrative path— as suitable for conventional Biblical chronology — runs downwards: Christ in Limbo, the Three Marys at the Tomb, *Noli me tangere* — though we would expect it to run upwards, to maintain the alternating rhythm: down— up — down— up.

The three cycles link with one another: the Marian cycle, the Passion cycle and the Easter cycle. Only the last one is contained within a single column; the other two have their scenes split between two columns (the Marian cycle) or they begin in the previous column (the Passion cycle). In the case of the Marian cycle, this divides the scenes from Christ's childhood (the Presentation in the Temple and Christ among the Doctors) from the remaining scenes. The dovetailing of the cycles splits the logic of the narrative intended to be read vertically.

Both the open and the closed views combine scenes from the life of Christ and of the Virgin. The open altarpiece shows the narrative of the Incarnation and man's salvation, as well as the Virgin's role in the story of her son, presented as glorious and triumphant. The closed altarpiece narrates the story of the Virgin and Christ's childhood, juxtaposed with the Passion and the conquering of death by the Resurrected Christ (in the Passion cycle: from the Descent into Limbo to *Noli me tangere*), which marks the history of Salvation as both the continuation of, and a result of, Mary's own life. However, this does not clarify the strangely interrupted rhythm of scenes in the closed altarpiece.

Formerly scholars believed that the original composition of the panels in the last column was reversed: from the top *Noli me tangere*, Three Marys at the Tomb in the middle and the Descent into Limbo at the bottom and that the altarpiece was erroneously reconstructed during

restoration work in the seventeenth century.⁴⁵⁴ It is impossible to confirm that hypothesis. Piotr Skubiszewski, in his fundamental study “The Easter Cycle in *St. Mary’s Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss,” argued against that idea.⁴⁵⁵ Citing earlier scholars, he discussed the history of the altarpiece and stressed that the two restoration campaigns, in the mid-seventeenth century and in 1796, were both limited to painterly interventions, without dismantling the panels.⁴⁵⁶ Skubiszewski tied the selection and the order of the scenes in the Easter cycle to literary tradition, and the iconography of the Descent into Limbo to the Easter liturgy and the liturgical rites *Elevatio Crucis* and *Visitatio sepulchri*, and their paraliturgical dramatisations. Against one tradition, based on the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, which accepted that the soul of Christ abandoned His mortal body during death on the cross and descended into limbo, therefore placing the *Descensus ad inferos* directly after the Crucifixion, was another tradition, based on the Apostles’ Creed, which positioned the Descent into Limbo after the Descent from the Cross, the Lamentation, and the Entombment, but before the Resurrection. The moment of the Descent into Limbo was codified in the *Credo*, confirmed during the Fourth Lateran Council (1215): “...*passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus et sepultus, descendit ad inferna, tertio die resurrexit...*” All three episodes depicted in Stoss’s altarpiece constituted important elements of the Easter rites, described in one of the previous chapters: The Descent into Limbo – in the *Elevatio Crucis*, Three Marys at the Tomb and Noli Me Tangere – in the *Visitatio sepulchri*. The final scene when Christ speaks to Mary Magdalene after the Resurrection (“Touch me not! [for I am not yet ascended to my Father]”), showing the deified body of Christ, speaks indirectly about the Resurrection and substitutes the

454 For instance: T. Dobrowolski, J.E. Dutkiewicz, *Wit Stwosz. Ołtarz Krakowski*, Warsaw 1951, p. 17; T. Dobrowolski, *Wit Stwosz. Ołtarz Mariacki. Epoka i środowisko*, Cracow 1981, p. 101.

455 P. Skubiszewski, “Der Osterzyklus im Marienaltar des Veit Stoß,” in: *Veit Stoß. Die Vorträge des Nürnberger Symposions*, (symposium Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg – Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte Munich 1981), ed. by R. Kahsnitz, Munich 1985, pp. 123–140. For more on the retable see note 186.

456 T. Szydłowski, “O Wita Stwosza Ołtarzu Mariackim i jego pierwotnym wyglądzie,” *Prace Komisji Historii Sztuki* 2, 1922, pp. 1–100.

scene, shown inside the altarpiece, hidden behind the closed wing. The Resurrection is also described during the *Visitatio sepulchri* in a chanted sequence *Victime paschali*, performed by Mary Magdalene, who encountered Christ as a gardener (*Noli me tangere*). The *Elevatio* preceded the *Visitatio sepulchri*, therefore the Descent into Limbo should have come before the episodes of the Three Marys at the Tomb and the *Noli me tangere*. However, in the *Elevatio Crucis* the Descent occurred *after* the symbolic moment of the Resurrection. It appeared in the antiphons *Cum rex gloriae* and *Tollite portas* and was narrated in a dialogue performed during or immediately before the Resurrection procession. It was chanted and performed after the removal of the cross from the tomb (it was subsequently carried in the procession), a moment symbolizing the Resurrection. The Descent into Limbo appears after the episodes of the Resurrection and *Noli me tangere* in French ivory diptychs from the fourteenth century, and in many large-scale French and German altarpieces from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. All this seems to justify the depiction of the Descent after the Resurrection, against the canonic order of the episodes. If *Noli me tangere* substituted the scene of the Resurrection in the *St. Mary Altarpiece*, then the present order of the scenes can be read from the bottom to the top, starting with *Noli me tangere*, through the scene of the Three Marys, to the Descent into Limbo. It means that the order may be original, but read differently than we think today, in a narrative that ascends upwards, rather than descending. There is therefore no need to assume the rearrangement of the panels of the altarpiece.

The placing of the *Noli me tangere* at the beginning of the Easter cycle emphasised the Resurrection and highlighted the role of Mary Magdalene in the history of Salvation. It did so in accordance with her role in the rite *Visitatio sepulchri* and the texts of the Paschal mystery plays, but also with regards to medieval dogmatic theology (for instance, that of William Durand), which presented Mary Magdalene as the first witness of the Resurrection, and therefore as the mark of the absolution of humanity's sins (a converted prostitute receives the special grace of being the first human to see Christ after the Resurrection); she therefore becomes the symbol of the saved Church.

The order of the panels was also dictated by the ability to group the images following different directions, through various juxtapositions of their neighboring scenes. For instance, the bodily depiction of the Resurrected Christ in the scene *Noli me tangere* gained a dogmatic meaning when juxtaposed with the scene of the Entombment that preceded it horizontally, highlighting the meaning of the *Depositio* and *Elevatio Crucis*. The *Harrowing of Hell*,

when interpreted in the light of the neighboring Crucifixion, underlines the universal character of man's salvation. This juxtaposition showed Mary as the "new Eve," recalling the context of the Marian cycle from the left panels of the altarpiece. It offers a suitable conclusion to the entire programme of the closed altarpiece, suggesting the parallel between Eve, the Virgin and Mary Magdalene. The parallel is particularly prominent in relation to the first column of panels, showing the history of Mary's conception, birth and her presentation in the temple, whilst referencing the idea of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin: the conception of the Virgin without original sin finds its analogy and fulfilment in the salvation of people, as well as in the Church, personified by Mary Magdalene.

The horizontal sequence of the top panels include: the Immaculate conception of the Virgin (the Meeting at the Golden Gate); the Arrest of the Christ; The Crucifixion, and the Descent into Limbo. It shows the linked moments in the history of Salvation: the divine plan for the Virgin to be there conceived without sin, to be an unblemished vessel to carry the Saviour; the Passion and the Crucifixion as the keystones of the history of Salvation, and finally the pouring out of grace onto the whole of humanity, including people who lived before Christ. Thus, it refers to the aim of Salvation – freeing humanity from its sins, which are the cause of death. The horizontal sequence of the middle panels talks about the body: of the corporeal birth of the immaculately conceived Virgin in the scene of the Birth of the Virgin; about the physical death of Christ in the scene of the Lamentation, showing the Body of Christ (*Corpus Christi*) as the instrument of Salvation and the Eucharistic body; about the physical absence of Christ in the open tomb following His death, and in turn – about the real presence of His body on the altar during the Eucharist (because every altarpiece is a symbolic *sepulchrum*, a sarcophagus: Christ's tomb). The horizontal sequence of the bottom scenes: The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple – the Presentation of Christ in the Temple – the Entombment – the *Noli me tangere* – highlighted the theme of the altar. In the two first scenes, the altar in the temple anticipates the Eucharist, and in the third scene, the tomb acts as the altar and the altar as a tomb. In the last scene, Christ's transformed body speaks through association about transubstantiation, which is at the heart of the Eucharist, and the chief part of the liturgy of the mass, *i.e.* of the altar.

In other words, the narrative in the closed *St. Mary Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss runs logically, according to the arrangement down, up, down, up; but it also allows for the scenes in horizontal rows to be linked in theologically related sequences.

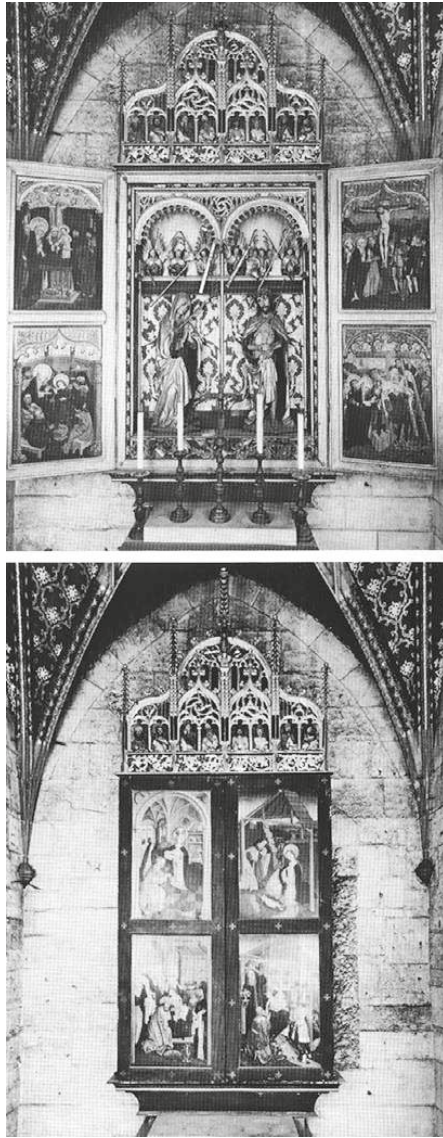


Fig. 530: Workshop from Lesser Poland, *Triptych of the Virgin of Sorrows* from the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Cracow Cathedral, fourth quarter of the 15th century, Cracow, Royal Cathedral



Fig. 531: *Gospels of John of Opava (Johannes von Troppau)*, after 1368, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1182

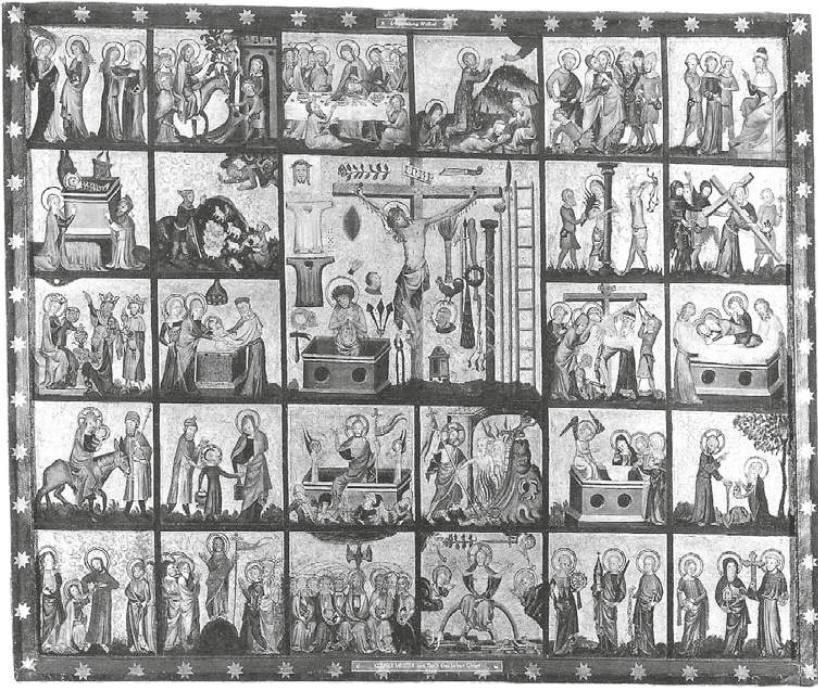


Fig. 532: Master from Cologne, *Life of Christ*, panel from the convent of the Poor Clares in Cologne, c. 1370–1380, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum



Fig. 533: Workshop of Bartholomäus Bruyn the Elder, *Scenes from the Lives of St. Victor and St. Helena*, wings of the altarpiece, 1529, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum



Fig. 534: Master from Danzig/Gdańsk, *Tabernacle Altarpiece*, from the Church of Our Lady in Gdańsk, c. 1425–1430, Warsaw, National Museum (figure of the Virgin inserted secondarily)



Fig. 535: Master from Cologne, *Der kleine Dom* – triptych from the Church of the Poor Clares, Sankt Clara am Römerturm in Cologne, c. 1355, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum

There are numerous examples of combining various directions of reading narrative scenes according to their place in the altarpiece. This is the case of the *Retable of Our Lady of Sorrows* in the Holy Cross Chapel in Wawel Cathedral (last quarter of the fifteenth century) [fig. 530], where on the closed wings the scenes are arranged clockwise, from the top left: the Annunciation, the Nativity, and below the Adoration of the Magi, and the Circumcision. When the wings are open, the shrine includes carved figures of Our Lady of Sorrows and Christ as the Man of Sorrows, and an angelic choir with the *Arma Christi*. On the recto sides of the panels are painted scenes that have to be read separately on each wing, in a vertical fashion, according to a hierarchical order from the top to the bottom. At the top left, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple is shown, and below it Christ among the Doctors; at the top right, the Crucifixion is placed, and below it the Descent from the Cross.

The *Altarpiece of St. Barbara* from Wrocław (see chapter III.2.2) [figs. 286–290] in the first view showed the Passion of Christ, which had to be read in two levels on the left wing. The viewer's gaze then had to skip to the central part with two large panels of the Crucifixion and the Descent from the Cross, and then the narrative continued on the right wing, again in two levels. In that way, the continuous narrative from left to right was dense and complicated in the wings, to highlight the importance of the two main scenes in the center. The traditional reading of the scenes from left to right was combined with the hierarchy of the center and the of the top and bottom. In the

second view, the continuous narration in the horizontal axis, from right to left, in two rows, which entered into the space of the middle panel was most important, but it is interrupted there with statuesque, iconic figures of saints.

In large painted cycles, framed within a multi-panel altarpiece, the narrative typically unfolds according to the standard direction of reading: from left to right, in rows from the top (Suckale: *Lese-Zyklus*). There are exceptions to this rule, for instance the aforementioned altarpiece by the Master of Vyšší Brod (read from the bottom to the top). The rule was established in illuminated manuscripts from antiquity in both volumes and scrolls. A scroll is always read from the left to the right, and from the top to the bottom, and the illuminations in manuscripts follow that sequence. This tradition is clear, if not ostentatiously highlighted, in the Gospels of John of Opava (Johannes von Troppau, after 1368, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1182) [fig. 531].⁴⁵⁷ The sequence is developed prominently in multi-panel altarpieces and the fresco cycles of medieval churches, town halls and other lay buildings. It appears on many thirteenth- and fourteenth-century ivory diptychs and triptychs. The arrangement dominates the devotional panels related to Franciscan piety, particularly popular in Cologne and the Lower Rhine regions. The panel with twenty-six scenes from the life of Christ, surrounding the central image of the Crucified Christ with the arma Christi, probably comes from the monastery of the Poor Clares in Cologne (c. 1370–1380, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) [fig. 532].⁴⁵⁸ The cycle was intended to be viewed slowly, painstakingly, and with great patience, step by step, scene after scene, as if reading words in a sentence, the viewer's gaze being directed from the top downwards and from left to right. In Cologne painting, this type of narrative remained popular for a long time. It was adopted into "panels" painted on canvas in the mid-fifteenth century, for instance those by the Master of the Passion Cycles (Meister der Passionsfolgen: *The Passion of Christ in Twenty Scenes and the Life and Passion of Christ in Thirty-One Scenes*; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) and by an anonymous painter from Cologne (*Life of Christ in Twelve Scenes*; Cologne, same location).⁴⁵⁹ However, it is a system of

457 *Gospels of John of Opava in Vienna*: G. Schmidt, "Johann von Troppau und die vorromanische Buchmalerei. Vom idealen Wert altertümlicher Formen in der Kunst des 14. Jahrhunderts," in: *Studien zur Buchmalerei und Goldschmiedekunst des Mittelalters*, ed. F. Dettweiler, H. Köllner, P.A. Riedl, Marburg an der Lahn 1967, pp. 275–292. M. Bacci, "San Luca come Petrarca. Visioni dell'artista-letterato nell'Evangelario di Giovanni da Opava (1368)," in: *Entre la letra y el pincel. El artista medieval: leyenda, identidad y estatus*, ed. by M.A Castiñeiras González, El Ejido / Almería 2017, pp. 53–56.

458 F.G. Zehnder, *Katalog der Alkölnner Malerei...*, pp. 116–120.

459 F.G. Zehnder, *Katalog der Alkölnner Malerei...*, pp. 361–368 (Master of the Passion Cycles) and pp. 151–154.

narrative widely disseminated in northern German painting from the early fifteenth century – for instance among artists from Westphalia and Lübeck. A notable example is the aforementioned *Golden Panel* from c. 1418–1420 (Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum), created probably by two artists active in Lüneburg, one from Göttingen in Lower Saxony, who remained under the influence of Conrad von Soest, and the other, younger, from the Lower Rhine area, influenced by the Cologne Master of Sankt Laurenz [figs. 355–357].⁴⁶⁰ Formed of four wings, which framed a reliquary (see chapter III. 2.4), it created a polyptych, with thirty six panels in the first view, nine on each side of the panel, with detailed presentations of the life of Christ and the Virgin, read in three long rows, through all fields of wings, from left to right, and from top to bottom.

In the fifteenth century, this model of multi-panel narrative was adapted to various large-scale altarpieces with moveable wings (see the examples discussed earlier). In the early sixteenth century, the model was transformed to spatially connect various episodes, as in the two wings with the lives of St. Victor and St. Helena, from the Cologne workshop of Bartholomäus Bruyn the Elder (1529, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) [fig. 533].⁴⁶¹

Various works did not follow the rule of reading from left to right and introduced the opposite direction of reading the narrative (Suckale: *Im Gegensinn*). This model was particularly common in fresco cycles, placed on the right, southern nave of the church, where the reversed direction of reading is justified by the natural movement of the faithful through space, from the entrance to the choir, as in the Passion cycle by Lippo Memmi from the parish church at San Gimignano. In the North, the examples of the reversed order include the altarpiece from the Church of Our Lady in Gdańsk (now Warsaw, National Museum) c. 1425, perhaps 1430 [fig. 534].⁴⁶² It comes from the chapel of Cosmas and Damian, patron saints of surgeons and barbers, located in the north-east corner of the ambulatory. The narrative from right to left (the Marriage of the Virgin, the Adoration of the Magi, the Dormition, the Coronation of the Virgin) results again from the direction of movement of the faithful, who would walk down the nave of church towards the main altarpiece, and then proceed around it to see the versos of the side panels. They then entered the ambulatory, where to the left, inside the chapel, was the altarpiece, approached from the right. The specific condition of viewing forced the direction of the scenes to

460 Cf. note 238.

461 F.G. Zehnder, *Katalog der Altkölner Malerei...*, pp. 41–45.

462 *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce*, vol. II, pp. 165–166; *The Gallery of Medieval Art...*, no. I.15.

be read from right to left. A similar mode of narrative appeared earlier in the triptych from the church of the Poor Clares in Cologne – Sankt Clara am Römerturm – called *Der kleine Dom*, commissioned c. 1355 (Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum) [fig. 535].

Cycles on external walls of choirs were also read in a reversed order. This direction of reading was dictated by the movement around the choir during any kind of medieval procession. Walking out of the choir, the procession moved around the space clockwise from the exit. This meant that the wall of the church was on the right-hand side and the scenes had to follow a reversed order, from right to left, contrary to the usual the direction of writing and reading. Various reliefs of the *Via Crucis* from c. 1500, placed on the external walls of the choirs in Nuremberg and Bamberg, follow this arrangement.⁴⁶³ It structured the narrative of the epitaph of Sebald Schreyer and Matthäus Landauer, carved in relief c. 1490–1492 by the workshop of Adam Kraft on the choir elevation of St. Sebald's church in Nuremberg [figs. 536–537].⁴⁶⁴ From the right the scenes include: the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion (shown as an episode of the Lifting of the Cross), the Entombment and the Resurrection. This type of object was intended to be viewed from various angles; itself immobile, it evoked the movement of the faithful. The movement of the body of believers, participating in a procession or walking around the choir, and their animated gaze – continuous, prolonged, examined the scenes in detail.

463 R. Zittlau, *Heiliggrabkapelle und Kreuzweg. Eine Bauaufgabe in Nürnberg um 1500*, Nuremberg 1992.

464 Workshop of Adam Kraft, *Epitaph of Sebald Schreyer and Matthäus Landauer*, church of St. Sebald in Nuremberg: W. Schwemmer, *Adam Kraft*, Nuremberg 1958, p. 16; M. Baxandall, *Die Kunst der Bildschnitzer...*, p. 355; G. Roeder, E. Bibelriether, *500 Jahre Grabmal der Familien Schreyer und Landauer von Adam Kraft*, exh. cat., Dresdner Bank AG – Sankt Sebald, Nuremberg 1992; U. Söding, “Das Schreyer-Landauer-Epitaph und die Stilbildung bei Adam Kraft,” in: *Adam Kraft. Die Beiträge des Kolloquiums im Germanischen Nationalmuseum*, ed. by F.M. Kammel, (*Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums / Wissenschaftliche Beibänd* 20), Nuremberg 2002, pp. 109–130; C. Schleif, “Rituale in Stein. Erzählungen für eine breite und diverse Öffentlichkeit,” in: *Adam Kraft...*, pp. 253–270; G. Weilandt, “Der Blick durch die Wand. Adam Krafts Schreyer-Landauer-Grabmal als szenisches Andachtsbild,” in: *Adam Kraft...*, pp. 271–294; R. Suckale, “Was lässt sich über das Aussehen des ursprünglichen Wandgemäldes der Schreyer-Landauer-Grabstätte am Chor von St. Sebald in Nürnberg sagen?,” in: *Von Kunst und Temperament*, (Festschrift Eberhard König), ed. by C. Zöhl, M. Hofmann, Turnhout 2007, pp. 273–279.

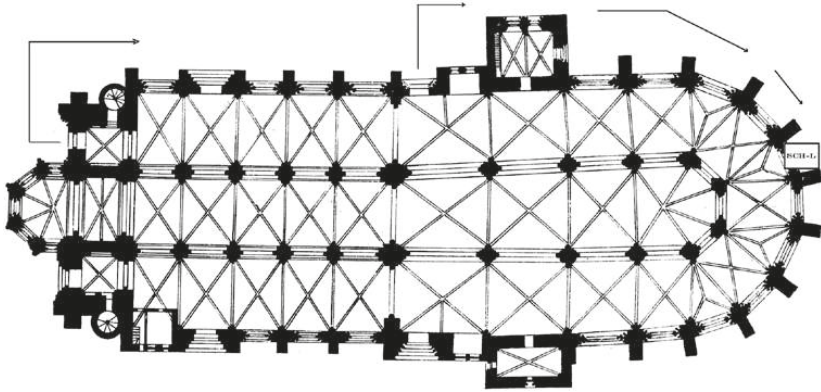


Fig. 536: Plan of the church of St. Sebald in Nuremberg, with the direction of the procession route indicated

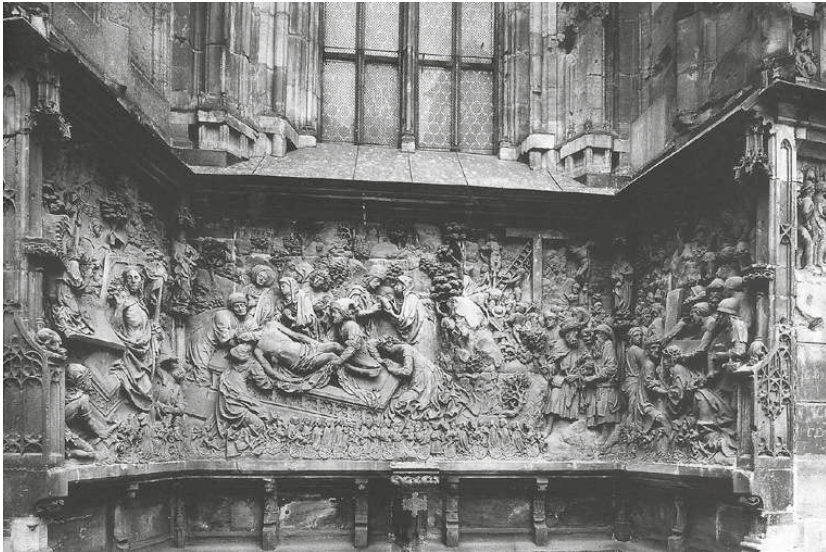


Fig. 537: Workshop of Adam Kraft, *Epitaph of Sebald Schreyer and Matthäus Landauer*, 1490–1492, Nuremberg, Church of St. Sebald



Fig. 538: Wolfgang Katzheimer and Monogrammist L.Cz., *Tucher Altarpiece – Road to Calvary and the Crucifixion*, 1485, Nuremberg, Church of St. Sebald



Fig. 539: Master from Westphalia or from Lower Saxony, panels of the altarpiece from the church of Sankt Aegidius in Hannoversch Münden, c. 1400, Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum

Even in an altarpiece with a single painted panel, the narrative sometimes runs in the opposite direction to the viewer's expectations, from right to left – as in the *Tucher Votive Panel* from 1485, in St. Sebald's church in Nuremberg [fig. 538].⁴⁶⁵ The work by Wolfgang Katzheimer and Master L.Cz. shows a multi-figure and multi-episode narrative of the Carrying of the Cross and the Crucifixion – first, in the bottom, from the right edge to the left, with scenes above continuing again to the right, to the climactic crowded scene of the Crucifixion at the top of the composition. The reversed order of reading – from right to left – links with the reversed looking from top to the bottom: the narrative zigzags, from the base of the panel to its upper edge. The direction from right to left is common for representations of the Road to Calvary. It is in this way that we may read the scene in the print by Martin Schongauer (L.9, c. 1475) or in the drawing from his circle (Uppsala, Konstmuseum, c. 1480), though here the issue of direction is more complicated, as the design will always be reproduced in reverse in the final printed impression.

The clockwise and anticlockwise arrangements are other modes of viewing the narrative that do not follow the direction of writing (*Suckale: Die Uhr* and *Gegen die Uhr*). The clockwise order governs the panels in an altarpiece from the region of Lower Saxony-Westphalia, in the church of Sankt Aegidius in Hannoversch Münden, c. 1400 (Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum) [fig. 539].⁴⁶⁶ On the left wing, with the scenes from

465 Wolfgang Katzheimer and Master L.Cz., *Tucher Altarpiece from Nuremberg*: R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, vol. I, pp. 81–87, vol. II, cat. no. 49 (with further bibliography).

466 *Altarpiece from Hannoversch Münden*: M. Wolfson, *Die deutschen und niederländischen Gemälde...*, no. 49.

Christ's childhood, the gaze continues from the Annunciation in the upper left, through the Nativity in the upper right, to the Adoration of the Magi in the bottom right and the Presentation in the Temple (bottom left); whilst on the right wing, which shows the Passion of Christ, the narrative continues from the Arrest of Christ in the bottom right, through the bottom left scene of the Christ before Pilate, to the upper left scene of the Flagellation, and the upper right which depicts the Crowning with Thorns. Thus, on one wing the story starts at the top on the left and ends in the bottom right corner, which is a typical arrangement for the sequences of panels in open altarpieces with moveable wings. The clockwise arrangement of the Marian cycle is included in the altarpiece of the Sankt Jakobi church in Lübeck-Neustadt (*Neustädter Altar*), from the circle of Conrada von Soest c. 1435 (now Schwerin, Staatliches Museum, Schloss Güstrow).⁴⁶⁷ The story of St. John the Baptist, depicted on four panels of the closed main altarpiece in the church in Crailsheim, unfolds from the upper left panel, through the upper right, and then down towards the lower right and finally the lower left. The main altarpiece in Sankt Sigmund in Pustertal (south Tirol, after 1427) and two altarpieces from Spiš: the *Altarpiece of St. Catherine* in the Parish church of Levoča (c. 1410–1420) and the altarpiece in the Church in Smrečany (c. 1480) all follow a clockwise arrangement for their scenes.⁴⁶⁸

An anticlockwise reading order governs the narrative of many altarpieces, including the celebrated pentaptych the *Altarpiece of Wiener Neustadt* or *Frederick's Altar* (*Friedrichsaltar*), dated 1447, commissioned by King Frederick IV, the future Emperor Frederick III, for the Cistercian

467 **Altarpiece from Sankt Jakobi in Lübeck-Neustadt:** G.J. Pfeiffer, "‘Im Chor war früher der hohe Altar von Holtz geschnitten’. Zur Geschichte und Malerei des Coronatio-Retabels von 1435 aus St. Jakobi zu Lübeck." *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 87, 2007, pp. 9–40; K. Hegner, R. Erbentraut, F. Kluth, J. Schröder, *Der Marienkrönungs-Altar aus St. Jacobi zu Lübeck – Neustädter Altar*, Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Berlin 2009.

468 **Altarpiece from Pustertal:** E. Egg, "Zur Brixener Malerei in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts," *Der Schlern* 41, 1961, pp. 87–94; Th. Müller, *Gotische Skulptur in Tirol*, Bozen–Innsbruck–Vienna 1976, pp. 23, 432, Abb. 68–69, XVI, XVII; H. Schindler, *Der Schnitzaltar...*, pp. 34; F.-H. Hye, "Der Altar von St. Sigmund im Pustertal. Ein Denkmal zur Erinnerung an die Geburt Herzog Sigmunds des Münzreichen?," *Der Schlern* 46, 1972, pp. 120–124; H. Dopsch, "Kaiser Sigmund und König Albrecht II. Zwei Herrscher des Spätmittelalters auf gotischen Flügelaltären in Tirol," in: *Tirol – Österreich – Italien. Festschrift für Josef Riedmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. K. Brandstätter, J. Hörmann, Innsbruck 2005, pp. 183–199.

church in Viktring or Wiener Neustadt, now in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna [fig. 540].⁴⁶⁹ When fully open it shows in the wings a set of scenes in relief from the life of the Virgin, which should be viewed from the bottom left panel (The Nativity), through the bottom right (the Adoration of the Magi), top right (the Dormition of the Virgin), to the concluding scene in top left (the Coronation of the Virgin). *The Altar of the Three Magi* by Hans Pleydenwurff and his workshop in the church of St. Lawrence in Nuremberg (c. 1460)⁴⁷⁰ [fig. 541] develops in its wings the life of the Virgin according to the following sequence: in the top left, *the Annunciation*; in the bottom left, *the Nativity*; in the bottom right, *the Massacre of the Innocents*, and in the top right, *The Flight into Egypt*. Similarly, in the slightly later (c. 1479) *Altarpiece of the Furriers' Guild* from the church of St. Mary Magdalene in Breslau/Wrocław (now Warsaw, National Museum) the Passion of Christ starts at the top of the left wing (the Arrest), and descends to the bottom (The Crowning with Thorns), in the lower section it continues onto the right wing (Ecce homo) and concludes at the top of the right wing (*Via Crucis* – Christ Falls on the Road to Calvary).⁴⁷¹ The same arrangement governs the panels by Hans Schüchlin and his workshop, executed in 1469 for the main altarpiece of the church in Tiefenbronn [fig. 542]. The scenes on the wings include: Christ before Pilate, the Carrying of the Cross, the Entombment, the Resurrection (with the Crucifixion in the crowning of the altarpiece and the Descent from the Cross and the Lamentation in the shrine). The *Altarpiece of the Agony in the Garden* (c. 1475) by the Master L.Cz. follows the same sequence: Christ before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion (the central panel is in the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt; and the side panels may be found in: Berlin, Gemäldegalerie; Paris, Louvre; Nuremberg, Germanisches

469 *Altarpiece from Wiener Neustadt*: A. Saliger, M. Koller, G. Frodl, *Der Wiener Neustädter Altar und der "Friedrichs-Meister,"* exh. cat., Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna 1999; A. Rosenauer, *Spätmittelalter und Renaissance, (Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich,* vol. 3) Munich 2003, pp. 418–419; *Der Wiener Neustädter Altar in St. Stephan in Wien. Erforschung und Restaurierung 1985–2004,* ed. by A. Saliger, exh. cat., Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna 2004; I. Flor, *Glaube und Macht. Die mittelalterliche Bildsymbolik der trinitarischen Marienkrönung,* Graz 2007, chapter 11, pp. 283–351.

470 Hans Pleydenwurff and workshop, *The Altarpiece of the Three Magi in the church of St. Lawrence in Nuremberg*: R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer,* pp. 138–153 and cat. no. 47 (with further bibliography).

471 *Altarpiece of the Furriers' Guild from Wrocław*: T. Dobrzeńiecki, *Catalogue of the Medieval Painting,* National Museum in Warsaw, Warsaw 1977, no. 81.

Nationalmuseum; and in a private collection) [fig. 543].⁴⁷² The *Altarpiece of the Crucifixion* from the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene in Göttingen shows a slightly different arrangement of scenes in the wings (c. 1460–1480; Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum);⁴⁷³ here the Passion starts on the top right panel (Christ before Pilate), and continues onto the second wing (at the top the Flagellation, at the bottom the Crowning with Thorns), and concludes again at the bottom of the right wing (The Resurrection).

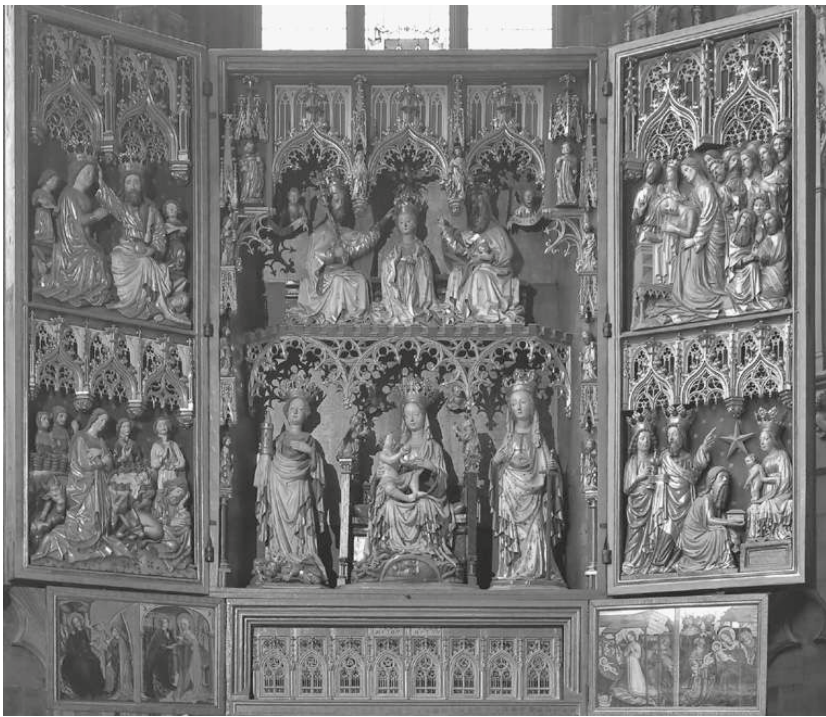


Fig. 540: Master of Friedrich III (*Friedrichsmeister*, Master of Friedrich III's Altarpiece), *Altarpiece from Wiener Neustadt*, 1447, Vienna, St. Stephen Cathedral

472 Master L.Cz., *Altarpiece of the Agony in the Garden*: R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, chapter III.11, pp. 267–280 and cat. no. 12 (with further bibliography).

473 *Altarpiece of the Crucifixion* from Mary Magdalene Chapel in Göttingen: M. Wolfson, *Die deutschen und niederländischen Gemälde ...*, cat. no. 58.

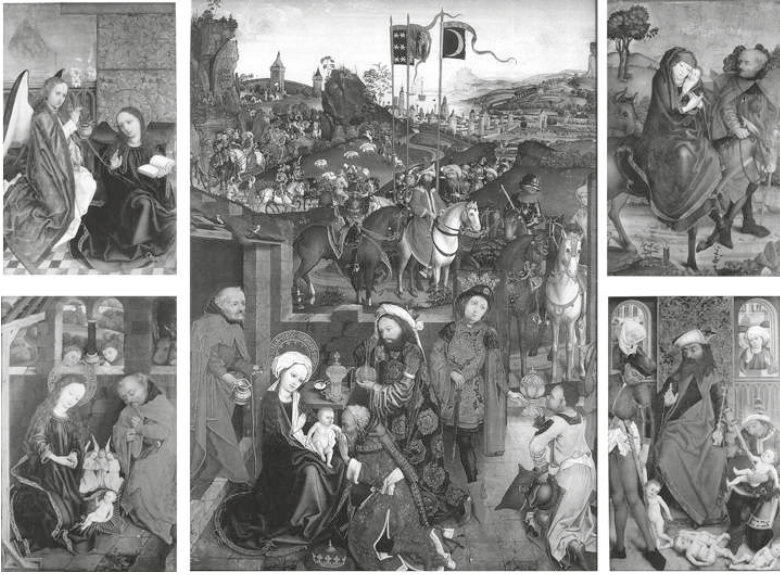


Fig. 541: Hans Pleydenwurff and his workshop, *The Altar of the Three Magi*, c. 1460, Nuremberg, St. Lawrence Church

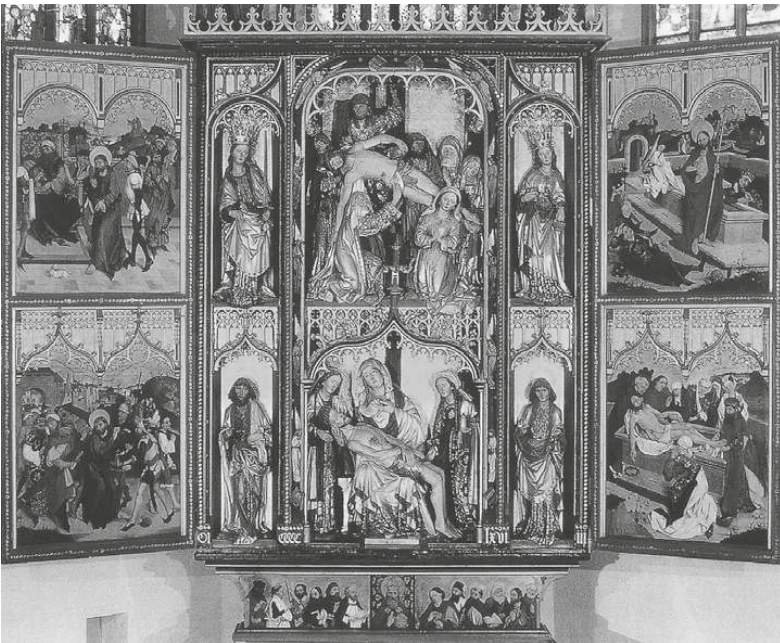


Fig. 542: Hans Schüchlin and his workshop, Retable of the main altar of the church in Tiefenbronn, 1469

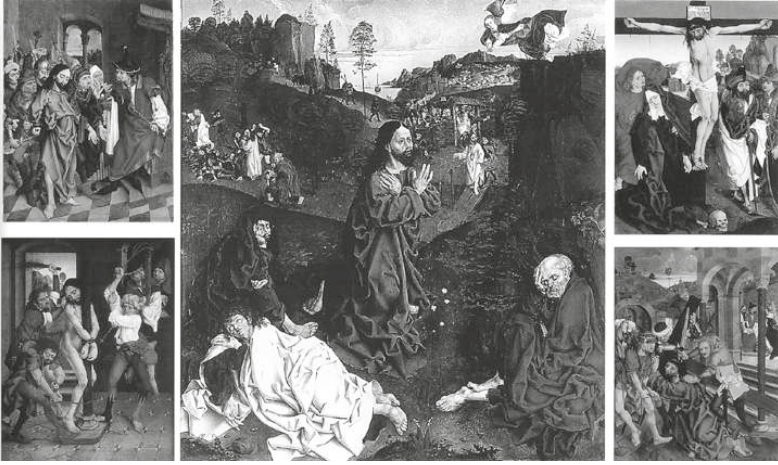


Fig. 543: Monogrammist L.Cz., *Altarpiece of the Agony in the Garden*, c. 1475, central panel in Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum; side panels: Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie; Paris, Louvre; Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum; private collection



Fig. 544: Parisian Workshop, *The Soissons Diptych*, c. 1280–1300, London, *The Victoria & Albert Museum* (211-1865)



Fig. 545: Retable of the main altar of the Dominican church in Neuruppin, end of 14th c.

An extremely rare narrative arrangement was the system that included the reading of scenes within one row from left to right, and then in the next row from right to left, and sometimes in the next row again from left to right and so on. It is a system of bi-directional text formatting called a boustrophedon ('ox-turning' from *bous* – ox, *strophe* – turn, turning like oxen in ploughing), developed in Ancient Greece from the sixth century B.C.E., during the period when Greek writing was becoming distinct from the Phoenician alphabet. This arrangement appears in a Parisian ivory diptych from c. 1280–1300 (London, Victoria and Albert Museum) [fig. 544].⁴⁷⁴ In

474 Parisian ivory diptych c. 1280–1300: R. Koechlin, *Les Ivoires gothiques Francis*, Paris 1924, cat. no. 38; J. Natanson, *Gothic Ivories of the 13th and 14th Centuries*, London 1951, pp. 33–34; D. Gaborit-Chopin, *Ivoires du Moyen-Âge*, Fribourg 1978, pp. 143–145; P. Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury: the Art of the Middle Ages in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London 1986, pp. 188–189; *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, ed. P. Barnet, exh. cat., Detroit Institute of Arts – Walters Art Gallery Baltimore 1997, pp. 44–45 and 95–114; *L'art au temps des rois maudits: Philippe le Bel et ses fils (1285–1328)*, exh. cat., Grand Palais, Paris 1998, cat. no. 82 (reproduced as a mirror image); P. Williamson, P. Motture, *Medieval and Renaissance Treasures from the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London 2007, cat. no. 15; S. M. Guérin, *Tears of Compunction: French Gothic Ivories in Devotional Practice*, PhD Thesis, University of Toronto 2009, pp. 367–368; *Der Naumburger Meister – Bildhauer und Architekt im Europa der Kathedralen*, exh. cat., Naumburg 2011, pp. 1510–1511.

the late fourteenth century, the same formatting is included in a stone altarpiece from the Dominican church in Neuruppin [fig. 545], where in the top row the scenes proceed from left to right: the Presentation in the Temple, (central, excluded from the narrative rhythm), then the Coronation of the Virgin, and the Resurrection; in the lower row from right to left: the Nativity, the Crucifixion (again the central scene does not belong to the cycle), and the Adoration of the Magi (the same bi-directional sequence was included in the lost side panels of the altarpiece).⁴⁷⁵ The story started in the lower row, with scenes arranged from right to left: at the top the Presentation in the Temple, then a leap downwards to the Crucifixion, and again to the top to the Resurrection, and finally the Coronation at the top in the middle.

Apart from various irregular, achronological cycles, the narrative systems discussed above show that they were not merely following the direction of writing, although it was the fundamental rule for the development of the narrative in monumental, multi-panel altarpieces.⁴⁷⁶

475 **Altarpiece of the Dominican Church in Neuruppin:** V. Friedrich, *Neuruppin, St. Trinitatis*, Passau 1995.

476 R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, chapter VIII.2.X: *Sondertypen*, pp. 447–448.

V. TIME AND THE NARRATIVE IN PAINTINGS

From many books and articles (including the second volume of my Polish book series) devoted to the Netherlandish painting of the fifteenth century, the reader can infer that devotional images dominated the late medieval Netherlandish art, in particular when it comes to the panel painting – with endless examples of the Virgin and Child, the Crucifixion, the Pietà, the Throne of Grace, and images of Christ as the Man of Sorrows, as well as other images of the Holy Trinity and the saints. However, the previous chapters of this book demonstrate that a great number of images focused on narrative, corresponding to modes of biographical writing, as well as to hagiographies, chronicles and chivalric romances. Moreover, often static iconic images were accompanied by narratives within a single, monumental work like a large-scale altarpiece. Therefore, it is important to describe the role of liturgical-altarpiece images and devotional-meditative panels in constructing the experience and duration of time for worshippers in relation to the images that form narrative cycles.⁴⁷⁷ The suspension of time in cult and devotional images and the unfolding of continuous, passing time in narrative representations occurred simultaneously. This experience was informed by the various categories of time, action and narrative that featured across different aspects of medieval daily routine, as well as in the intellectual life of the period.

V.1. The natural, calendar, liturgical and historic time

The medieval experience of time, its writing style and measurement were based on the understanding of the distinctive nature of ‘times,’ be they natural, astronomical, historic, social, or to do with agricultural cycles.⁴⁷⁸

477 For the narrative and time in Late Medieval Art see especially: G. Pochat, *Bild – Zeit. Zeitgestalt und Erzählstruktur in der bildenden Kunst des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna 1996 (2nd edition 2004); R. Suckale, *Süddeutsche szenische Tafelbilder um 1420–1450...*; K.Ch. Ghattas, *Rhythmus der Bilder. Narrative Strategien in Text- und Bildzeugnissen des 11. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, Cologne–Weimar–Vienna 2009.

478 See for instance: *Mensura – Maß, Zahl und Zahlensymbolik im Mittelalter*, ed. by A. Zimmermann, (Miscellanea mediaevalia. Veröffentlichungen des Thomas-Instituts der Universität zu Köln 16), Berlin–New York 1983–1984; H.-W. Goetz, “Zeit/Geschichte: Mittelalter,” in: *Europäische Mentalitätsgeschichte. Hauptthemen in Einzeldarstellungen*, ed. by P. Dinzelbacher, Stuttgart 1993, pp. 640–649; *Constructions of Time in the Late Middle Ages*, (*Disputatio: An International Transdisciplinary Journal of the Late Middle Ages* 2), ed. by

For instance, in the seventh century the Venerable St. Bede recognised different categories of measuring time: “natural” (the solar year), “custom” (months) and “power” (milestones established by ruling authorities, e.g. a fifteen-year cycle, after which the citizens of the Roman empire had to pay a special tax; Sunday as an official holiday *etc.*).⁴⁷⁹ Nicolas d’Oresme in the

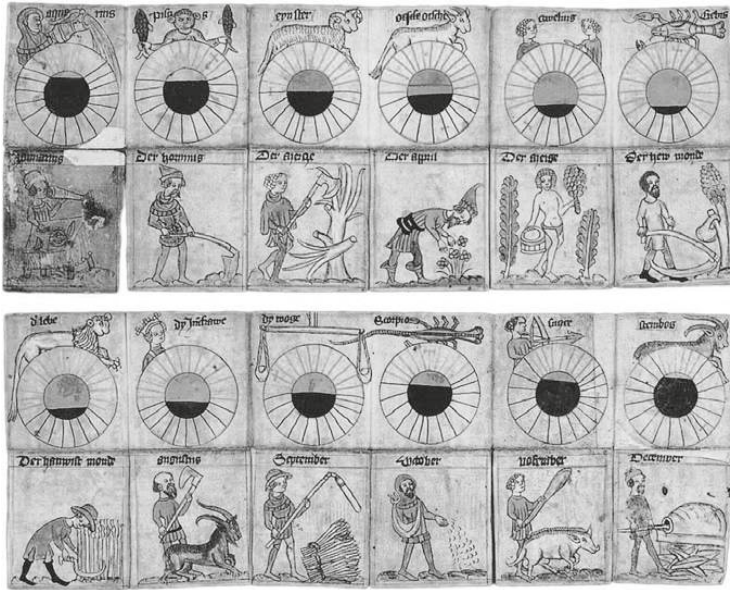


Fig. 546: Calendar on folded sheets, with the full cycle of the months and signs of Zodiac and an indication of the average number of hours of daylight in a given month, c. 1400, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Lib. Pic. A 72

- C. Poster, R.J. Utz, Evanston, Ill, 1997; *Ideologisierte Zeit. Kalender und Zeitvorstellungen im Abendland von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*, ed. by W. Hameter et al., Innsbruck – Munich 2005; H.-W. Goetz, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im hohen Mittelalter*, Berlin 2008; P. Dinzelsbacher, *Lebenswelten des Mittelalters 1000–1500*, Badenweiler 2010, chapter *Zeit*, pp. 138–158; A. Wolkenhauer, *Sonne und Mond, Kalender und Uhr. Studien zur Darstellung und poetischen Reflexion der Zeitordnung in der römischen Literatur*, Berlin 2011; M. Czock, *ZeitenWelten. Zur Verschränkung von Weltdeutung und Zeitwahrnehmung, 750–1350*, Cologne–Weimar–Vienna 2016; M. Champion, *The Fullness of Time: Temporalities of the Fifteenth-Century Low Countries*, Chicago 2017; M.D. Papi, “La concezione del tempo nel mondo del lavoro in Italia (XII–XIV),” in: *Lavorare nel medio evo. Rappresentazioni ed esempi dall’Italia dei secc. X–XVI*, (conference Todi 1980), Spoleto 2017, pp. 199–218.
- 479 A.-D. von den Brincken, “Hodie tot anni sunt. Große Zeiträume im Geschichtsdenken der Frühen und Hohen Scholastik,” in: *Mensura – Maß, Zahl und Zahlensymbolik...*, pp. 192–211, on p. 193.

fourteenth century distinguished between natural time, measured according to the phenomenon of movement, and formal time, which was measured mathematically.⁴⁸⁰

Jacques Le Goff defined two periods of experiencing time: the High Middle Ages with its theological “Ecclesiastical time,” directed at man’s salvation, eternity and the eternal God, with time measured by the liturgical calendar, and the Late Middle Ages with its “time of the merchants” (time for trade and for the merchants), subordinate to practical needs, and including the organizing dates of negotiations, transactions, undertakings, transports, travels and financial gain.⁴⁸¹ However, these categories are too general to be functional in an analysis of medieval notions of time. Natural time was measured according to the astronomical cycles of the solar and lunar year, the rhythm of the seasons, the months dedicated to the season of the harvest, as shown in the calendar illustrations of illuminated manuscripts, and illustrations of the division of night and day, *etc.* [fig. 546]. To these natural categories, the ecclesiastical measuring of time was added: the liturgical calendar and the calendar of feasts, universal and local (specific for the diocese), as well as the system of prayers and services that governed the clock of monastic and canonical life, with its hours of Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers (*vesperae*) and Compline, included in breviaries and lay books of hours. Time was also measured according to human life cycles: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age; with various legal and customary definitions of the threshold point of adulthood (typically between the age of 18 and 21).

The liturgical calendar combined a calculating system based on ancient astronomical tradition and on the (apparent) movement of the sun around the globe and of the moon around the earth; in other words, the lunar and solar calendars combined with the canonic tradition going back to the First Council of Nicaea (325).⁴⁸² The Council established the feast of the Resurrection to be the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox on March 21st. A second key date was the feast of the Nativity, this time fixed to the 25th of December. The day determined the start of historic time: the beginning of the new, Christian era, an accounting commonly accepted from the tenth century. The

480 J. Sarnowski, “Zur Messung von Zeit und Bewegung,” in: *Mensura – Maß, Zahl und Zahlensymbolik im Mittelalter*, pp. 153–161, on p. 156.

481 J. Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. A. Goldhammer, Chicago 1980, pp. 29–43.

482 A. Borst, *Computus. Zeit und Zahl in der Geschichte Europa*, Berlin 1991.

Nativity also determined the beginning of time, the moment of Creation. According to a tradition attributed to St. Jerome, the world was created between March 18th and 25th of year 5199 before the birth of Christ. The year was calculated variously: from the Nativity (25th December), that is, the style called the Nativity of the Lord (*stilus a Nativitate*); or from 1st January – the Circumcision style (*stilus a Circumcisione*); and lastly from 25th March, the feast of the Annunciation, as the moment of the Incarnation of the Logos (*stilus a Annuntiatione*). The liturgical calendar absorbed the astronomical calendar. The March and September equinoxes occurred under the signs of Taurus and Libra, and those of June and December under the signs of Cancer and Sagittarius, which determined the four seasons. The cycles of changes in nature were translated into various systems. According to one system, Spring began on the feast of St. Peter's *Cathedra* (the chair of St. Peter), on 22nd February (on the eighth calends of March, in the Julian calendar); Summer on St. Urban's day, 25th May (on the eighth calends of June); Autumn on St. Bartholomew's day, 24th August (on the ninth calends of September), and Winter most commonly on 11th November, St. Martin's day (the third ides of November). Another system defined the beginning of Spring according to the moveable feast of Easter, marking Summer on St. John the Baptist's day (24th June), Autumn on the day of St. Michael the Archangel (29th September), and Winter on the Nativity (25th December). According to a third system (*Quatember*), the year was divided into cycles of three-day fasting (Ember days) on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, after the first Sunday of Lent, after Pentecost, after the Feast of the Cross (14th September) and St. Lucy's day (13th December).

Onto this complex system were added various political modes of measuring time: time counted from the beginning of the papacy of a specific pope, or from the enthronement of a bishop in a specific diocese, or from the beginning of the reign of a king or a duke. These modes of measuring time were dominant in local historic writing, in chronicles, and in narratives about specific rulers, countries, dioceses *etc.* Historiography linked the Christian method of measuring time – before and after the Birth of Christ – with the ancient Roman system (from the foundation of the City – *ad urbe condita*).

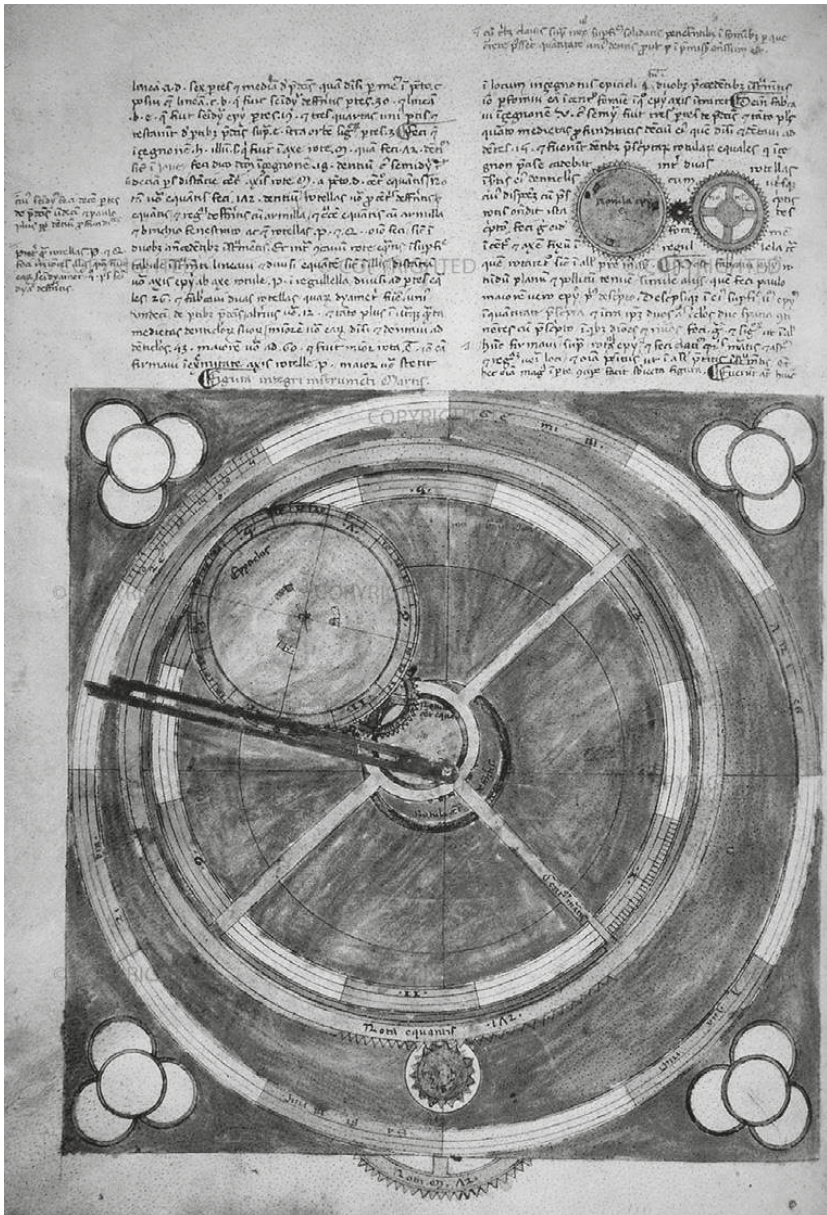


Fig. 547: Giovanni de' Dondi, *Astrarium*, manuscript with the description of the planetarium clock's construction, mid 14th century, Padua, Biblioteca Capitolare, Ms. D.39, ff. 12v-13r

Mechanical clocks were invented towards the end of the thirteenth century and became increasingly popular over the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁴⁸³ Their construction was based on cogwheels and they were displayed in public, on the clock towers of English cathedrals in Exeter (1284), Norwich (1290 and 1325), Canterbury (1291), Salisbury (1386), and the Abbey of St. Albans (constructed by Richard of Wallingford in 1330). They were also placed in the chapels of palaces, such as that of the Visconti family in Milan (1335) or on the *Astrarium*, constructed by Giovanni de' Dondi in Padua (1348–1364) [fig. 547]. Public clocks were also built in Genoa (1353) and Bologna (1356), amongst other examples. A cogwheel clock was visible from 1370 on the Tour de l'Horloge in the Palais de la Cité in Paris, keeping time for the entire city. The Teutonic Order from the end of the fourteenth century introduced a mechanical clock to measure the canonic hours of services in all subordinate monasteries, and to organise the work and life rhythms in their cities. The mechanical clocks of cities were not only practical devices for measuring the time of services and work; they also played a role in the rivalry that existed between various centres, and became symbols of prestige. Around five hundred documented public clocks from across Europe date from the fourteenth century. At the same time, sand clocks (hourglasses) were produced in Nuremberg, Venice and other centers for everyday domestic use. In the fifteenth century, and more widely towards the end of the century, monarchs, noblemen, patricians and great merchants commissioned moveable mechanical clocks to use at home or at their offices. The most important centers of the production of these clocks in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries were Nuremberg, Augsburg and Blois. Some clocks had new spring constructions; the earliest surviving example is the clock of Philip the Good from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, made in 1430. As a rule, clock towers and hand clocks only showed hours according to the astronomical system, divided into twenty-four units; but some fourteenth century devices included minutes such as the Dondi *Astrarium* in Padua. A clock with minutes is depicted in the illumination of the manuscript by Paulus Almanus

483 See for instance: E. von Bassermann-Jordan et al., *Die Geschichte der Zeitmessung und der Uhren*, Berlin 1920; E. von Bassermann-Jordan, H. von Bertele, *Uhren*, Braunschweig 1969; D.S. Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World*, Cambridge, Mass. 1983; J. Abeler, *Ullstein Uhren Buch. Eine Kulturgeschichte der Zeitmessung*, Frankfurt a.M. 1994; G. Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, Chicago–London 1996; G. König, *Die Uhr. Geschichte, Technik, Zeit*, Berlin 1999; C.M. Cipolla, *Zeit. Wie die mechanische Uhr das Leben veränderte*, Berlin 1999; G. Dohrn-van Rossum, *Die Geschichte der Stunde. Uhren und moderne Zeitordnungen*, Cologne 2007; D. Fléchon, *La conquête du temps. L'histoire de l'horlogerie des origines à nos jours. Découvertes, inventions, progrès*, Paris 2011.

from 1475;⁴⁸⁴ clocks with minutes or even seconds appeared more widely in Germany in the fifteenth century.

The experience of time changed with the dissemination of mechanical clocks. In earlier periods, the practical unit of time varied in duration according to the time of year, day and the daylight. Now the time unit became standardised. For instance, a lecture given at Oxford or at another university towards the end of June in the previous era lasted almost a half time longer than in the wintertime; now it was all unified according to the mechanical clock. The natural rhythm, dictated by the position of Sun and monitored by sundials, was transformed into abstract, rigorously measured time. However, mechanical clocks had to be set according to sundials, to show local and not universal time.

Both mechanically measured and natural time were, to some extent, reflected in the Late Medieval art.

Numerous illustrations in prayer books, books of hours and breviaries in simple terms addressed the measurement of units of natural time. These popular books, always written and illuminated for the use (*ad usum*) of the local community or diocese, according to the local church calendar, included the feast days of patron saints, liturgical cycles, prayers for universal feasts, and fasting periods. They made local and specific illustrations and prayers linked to the Annunciation as the beginning of Christian timekeeping and a potential beginning of the year; the Nativity was considered as the second potential beginning of the year, the Easter cycle, the Feast of the Holy Trinity and Pentecost. The illuminations showing the cycle of the year were merged together with the rhythm of prayers during the day (the cycle of the actual hours). Books of hours and prayer books often included calendar illustrations with the Labours of the Months, linked to the astronomical cycle of the zodiac and planets.

Whether they functioned independently or were included in altarpieces, paintings, sculptures, and reliefs depicted the cycle of universal feasts according to the liturgical calendar (devotional images with themes such as the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, Pentecost, the Last Judgment, as well as iconic images of the Virgin and Child, and of the Holy Trinity). In that sense, churches functioned as mnemonic “edifices” or “theatres of memory.” Part of a building, such as the choir of Wrocław cathedral, (according to Tadeusz Jurkowlaniec⁴⁸⁵), with a specific number of pillars, columns, bays, windows, and capitals decorated with figurative scenes, could constitute a mnemonic mechanism. These facilitated remembrance of the order of feasts and patron saints’ days in the liturgical

484 See “Time and timekeeping instruments,” in: J. Lankford, *History of Astronomy: An Encyclopedia*, London 1997, p. 529.

485 T. Jurkowlaniec, *Gmach pamięci. Z badań nad dekoracją rzeźbiarską prezbiterium katedry we Wrocławiu*, Warsaw 2004.

year, as well as enabling the calculation of the Easter triduum and the order of specific services and prayers.⁴⁸⁶ The idea of grounding memory through a set of *loci* – places of memory, the forming of an imaginary space to assist memory – has its roots in ancient rhetoric, such as in the anonymous treatise on memory *Ad Herennium* (c. 86–82 B.C.E.) and was well-known during the Middle Ages (Thomas Bradwardine, Hugh of St. Victor, Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas Aquinas, Ramon Llull among others). However, even without this specific context, church buildings were filled with paintings, figures, reliefs and altarpieces arranged in a way that helped to internalize the temporal order of the day, year, or the entire history of a particular place. This was also the role of large, multi-panel altarpieces, such as the *St. Mary Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss in Cracow discussed in relation to its chronological narrative. The altarpiece was a mnemonic tool for universal history, in the horizontal axis reporting the history of salvation through the figure of the Virgin as the *Co-redemptrix*: from her Davidic ancestry (the Tree of Jesse in the predella), through her role in the act of Redemption (Marian and Christological cycles in the wings), to the realm of Salvation (the representation of the Dormition of the Virgin and the Coronation in the main axis of the altarpiece). It was an auxiliary, illustrated liturgical calendar, through which the Marian and Christological cycles, including the Easter cycle, helped viewers to remember the order of feasts and rites.

486 On mnemonic arts and techniques: F. A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, Chicago 1966; M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge University Press 1990; her, *The Craft of Thought: Rhetoric, Meditation, and the Making of Images, 400–1200*, Cambridge University Press 1998; *Documenta Mnemonica. Text- und Bildzeugnisse zu Gedächtnislehren und Gedächtniskünsten von der Antike bis zum Ende der Frühen Neuzeit*, (*Das enzyklopädische Gedächtnis der Frühen Neuzeit. Enzyklopädie und Lexikonartikel zur Mnemonik*, vol. II), ed. J.J. Berns, W. Neuber, Tübingen 1998; U. Voigt, *Esels Welt. Mnemotechnik zwischen Simonides und Harry Lorayne*, Hamburg 2001; M. Carruthers, J. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, University of Pennsylvania Press 2002; A. Gormans, “Zum Greifen nahe. Die Gregorsmesse – ein gemalter mnemotechnischer Traktat des Spätmittelalters,” in: *Das Bild der Erscheinung...*, pp. 259–301; S. Khan, *Diversa Diversis. Mittelalterliche Standespredigten und ihre Visualisierung*, Cologne–Vienna–Weimar 2007; *Memory and Invention: Medieval and Renaissance literature, art and music*, (conference, Villa I Tatti, Florence, 2006), ed. by A.M. Busse Berger, M. Rossi, Florence 2009; *Mittelalterliche Wissenspeicher. Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Verbreitung ausgewählter ‘Orientierungswissens’ im Spannungsfeld von Gelehrsamkeit und Illiteratheit*, ed. by W. Hofmeister, Frankfurt a.M. 2009; M. Vollmer, *Fortuna diagrammatica. Das Rad der Fortuna als bildhafte Verschlüsselung der Schrift “De consolatio philosophiae” des Boethius*, Frankfurt a.M. 2009; K. Rivers, *Preaching the memory of virtue and vice: Memory, images, and preaching in the late Middle Ages*, Turnhout 2010.

Having a firm and systematic historic memory, as well as the historiographic remembering of the lives of the saints and lay people's routines, were particularly important. In the twelfth century, Honorius Augustodunensis listed the "recalling to mind of the lives of those who have gone before" as the third cause of image making, after the teaching of the illiterate and the adorning of buildings. The tradition of the craft of memory undoubtedly thrived in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. History and its memory were codified through elaborate systems of miniatures in chronicles, books about kingdoms, duchies, counties, dioceses, monasteries, cities, and regions. There are numerous examples of these manuscripts and we shall list only the most symptomatic from the circle of the Burgundian court and the milieu of Netherlandish illuminators.

Examples include the aforementioned illuminated codices (chapter III.1.1 and IV.1.) describing ancient histories, which functioned as chivalric romances, such as the popular stories about Alexander the Great – such as the *Livre des fais d'Alexandre le grant* by Quintus Curtius Rufus, translated by Vasco da Lucena (1468–1470, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 22547). The *History of Girart de Roussillon* (c. 1447–1450, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2549) combined a chivalric romance with a dynastic narrative – a record of the heroic past of the Burgundian Dukes. The *Chronicles of Hainaut (Chroniques de Hainaut)* by Jacques de Guise (1448–1468, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9242–9244) describe the story of that land, which had recently been incorporated into the Duchy of Burgundy. A vast panhistoric compendium, *La Fleur des histoires* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, mss. 9231–9232), narrates the universal history and the story of the French monarchy from the creation of the world to the reign of Charles VI (known as 'the Mad'). *The Chronicles and Conquests of Charlemagne (Cronicques et conquestes de Charlemaigne, 1458–1460*, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9066–9068) recall the reign of the Carolingian ruler, unequivocally naming Philip the Good as the heir of his might. The *History of Charles Martel (Histoire de Charles Martel or Chausons de Charles Martel, 1472*, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 6–9), legitimizes the autonomous power of the House of Valois-Burgundy based on its inheritance of Carolingian territory.

Volumes about crusades formed a specific category of historiographic books, including histories of elite orders of knight-aristocrats, such as the *History of the Golden Fleece (Histoire de la Toison d'or)* by Guillaume Fillastre (1468–1473, Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv; copies in: Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, ms. 9028 and Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms. 2948). The book was an expanded version of the sermon by Fillastre from 1468, delivered during the ceremonial Chapter meeting of the order, in which he described in detail three ancient and three biblical "fleeces," presenting them as symbols of virtues, which should characterise the Order's knights.

Fillastre's ambition remained incomplete at the time of his death in 1473, with only three of the six intended volumes about the specific *toison* completed. Each book is richly illuminated, and the volume in Vienna has a very fine binding. The story of the first crusade are narrated in the *Chronicles of Jerusalem* (*Chroniques de Jérusalem abrégées*, c. 1453–1454, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2533), commissioned by Philip the Good, as a reflection of his ambition to become the new king of Jerusalem and to lead the Christian monarchs in the fight against the Turks.

Similar sets of codices dedicated to the history of the world and the monarchy were also commissioned in other parts of Europe. Examples include the history books illustrated by Jean Fouquet and his workshop, the *Grandes Chroniques de France* (c. 1455–1460, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 6465); the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à Cèsar*, and the *Faits des Romains* (c. 1470–1475, Paris, Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques, and Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet), or those from workshops of Fouquet's circle (by the Master of the Munich Boccaccio and other illuminators). Additional works are the French translation by Laurent de Premierfait of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* (the so-called *Munich Boccaccio*; c. 1459–1465; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Gall. 6); or *Les Antiquités judaïques* and *De la guerre des Juifs* by Flavius Josephus (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 247 and ms. NAF 21013).⁴⁸⁷

487 **Jean Fouquet. General monographs, exhibition catalogues and surveys:** N. Reynaud, *Jean Fouquet*, Musée du Louvre, (Les dossiers du Département des Peintures 2), Paris 1981; E. König, *Französische Buchmalerei um 1450. Der Jovenel-Maler, der Maler des Genfer Boccaccio und die Anfänge Jean Fouquets*, Berlin 1982; S. Lombardi, *Jean Fouquet*, Florence 1983; S.Ch. Clancy, *Books of Hours in the 'Fouquet style': the Relationship of Jean Fouquet and the Hours of Étienne Chevalier to French Manuscript Illumination of the Fifteenth Century*, dissertation, Cornell University 1988; Th. Kren, *Fouquet's Century: Transformations in French Painting 1415–1530*, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles 1994; C. Schaefer, *Jean Fouquet an der Schwelle zur Renaissance*, Dresden 1994; F. Avril et al., *Jean Fouquet. Peintre et enlumineur du XV^e siècle*, exh. cat., Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris 2003 (re-edited 2010); E. Inglis, "Fouquet peintre d'histoire," in: *Jean Fouquet...*, pp. 70–75; *L'enluminure en France au temps de Jean Fouquet*, ed. by I. Delaunay, exh. cat., Musée Condé, Chantilly, Paris 2003; E. Inglis, *Jean Fouquet and the Invention of France: Art and Nation after the Hundred Years War*, New Haven 2011; *Jean Fouquet – Das Diptychon von Melun*, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, ed. by S. Kemperdick, Petersberg 2017. **Grandes Chroniques de France:** F. Avril, M.-Th. Gousset, B. Guenée, *Jean Fouquet. Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, Paris 1987 (in German: *Die Bilder der Grandes Chroniques de France*, Graz 1987); F. Avril et al., *Jean Fouquet. Peintre et enlumineur...*, cat. no. 26; C. Logemann, "Des Königs neue Räume. Genealogie

The illuminations did not always depict all the key and important episodes of their written narratives. The image and the text had to be examined together to create a full historiographic account. The sense of historic time, adopted in the text and the miniatures, was based on the idea of continuity of history, void of divisions between antiquity or biblical times, and contemporary medieval history. On the other hand the manuscripts showed history divided into episodes, recalled in a sequential order of events, just like the scenes in image cycles of painted altarpieces showing the life of the Virgin, Christ and the saints.

The rhythm of the illustrated narratives in miniatures, paintings and altarpieces had to be recognizable through manifold categorizations of time: the biological-natural cycle (mostly astronomical), with the overlapping method of timekeeping, and also historiographic time. However, this was not sufficient. The stories narrated through images are informed by philosophical and theological concepts of universal time as well.

IV.2. Time in medieval philosophy and theology

The medieval concept of historical and theological time were constructed conceptually and were distinct from the universal concept based on biological-natural time. It is beyond the scope of this book to analyse in detail the complex thinking about time, narrative and history developed in medieval philosophy and theology. It is, however, important to highlight the most important aspects of experiencing historic time.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335–c. 395) systematising time in the history of the world, elaborated on three ancient Greek terms: *kairos*, *akolouthia* and *eschaton*: moment, order and the end.⁴⁸⁸ *Kairos* is a fragment of time, a

und Zeremoniell in den ‘Grandes Chroniques de France’ des 14. Jahrhunderts,” in: *Ausmessen – Darstellen – Inszenieren: Raumkonzepte und die Wiedergabe von Räumen in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. by U. Kundert, B. Schmid, R. Schmidt, Zurich 2007, pp. 41–72. *Les Antiquité judaïques and De la guerre des Juifs*: G.N. Deutsch, *Iconographie de l’illustration de Flavius Josèphe au temps de Jean Fouquet*, Leiden–Boston 1986; F. Avril et al., *Jean Fouquet. Peintre et enlumineur du XV^e siècle*, cat. no. 34. *Histoire ancienne jusqu’à Cèsar and Faits des Romains*: F. Avril et al., *Jean Fouquet. Peintre et enlumineur...*, cat. no. 30; **Master of the Munich Boccaccio**: W. Pleister (ed., trans., comm.), *Giovanni Boccaccio. Die neun Bücher vom Glück und vom Unglück berühmter Männer und Frauen / De casibus virorum illustrium libri novem / mit 22 farbigen Miniaturen von der Hand und aus der Werkstatt des Meisters Jean Fouquet aus dem “Münchener Boccaccio” und 10 Holzschnitten von 1483*, Munich 1965; F. Avril et al., *Jean Fouquet. Peintre et enlumineur...*, cat. no. 32.

488 *Patrologia Graeca* 44, 72bc; 44, 236b; 44:981c; 45, 364c, 365a, 369b. 433d; 46, 105a; 46, 517d.

moment when God's will is done and the event occurs: the point of contact between the past and the future that happens now, resulting from the past and initiating future events, the continuation of the beginning. History is the "endless beginning" of new events. Time is a sequence of particular related events, which creates the successive chain-like continuity of history – the order of time – *akolouthia*. It has its own aim, and reaches its end, when that goal is obtained; this theological end of time is *eschaton*. God is present in all these modes of time, though He himself remains endless and eternal. He is present in the world through *kairoi*; *akolouthia* is the reflection of His eternity, and *eschaton* indicates the move to the state of eternal timelessness.

In the 11th volume of his *Confessions*, St. Augustine defined time as a price-less and measureless value, and as one of the dimensions of the world, created by God, who exists outside of it. It is linked to the change and movement that activate the world (following Aristotle), but it is also burdened by transience. The present is the time of cognition (perceptible though fleeting); the past is the time of memory, and the future the time of anticipation. Indeed, the past and the future exist only in human memory and in prophecies.

Medieval theologians adopted the concept of fluid, continuous time from Aristotle. The continuum – related to movement – was indivisible or infinitely divisible into ever smaller parts. The structure of time had a continuous fluidity. This definition of time clashed with the "atomistic" theory that time was composed of the smallest conceivable units.⁴⁸⁹ Here the source was the Bible (the "atomistic" theory was rooted in antique philosophy). In the First Letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul wrote that the resurrection of the body at the end of time will occur *ἐν ἀτόμῳ* (Latin: *in atomo*), meaning momentarily, in an instant. The Doctors of the Church who wrote about the atom include Tertullian, Ambrose, Jerome (in the *Vulgate*, *in atomo* is translated as *in momento*) and Augustine. The last of these believed that time can be divided until the smallest unit: an atom. The year consists of months, months of days, days of hours, and hours of smaller units, until the smallest unit, the atom. In this aspect St. Augustine is anti-Aristotelian. His concept of the atomic structure of time informed the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville, the most popular encyclopedia of the Middle Ages, written in the early seventh century as well as the writings of the Venerable Bede (*De temporum ratione*, 725), and the writings of Hrabanus Maurus (from the eighth to ninth centuries, *De universo*, *De computo*; ninth century), which in turn inspired an anonymous

489 B. Pabst, "Zeit aus Atomen oder Zeit als Kontinuum – Aspekte einer mittelalterlichen Diskussion," in: *Zeitkonzeptionen, Zeiterfahrung, Zeitmessung. Stationen ihres Wandels vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne*, ed. T. Ehlert, Paderborn–Munich 1997, pp. 80–102 (with bibliography on the medieval concept of time in philosophy and theology).

treatise *De divisionibus temporum* (ninth century). *Atomus* appears in early medieval writing also as: *ostentum*, *momentum*, and *punctum*. Hrabanus Maurus describes a sequence of fourteen units of time: *aetas* – an age, *seculum* – a century, *annus* – a year, *vicissitudo* – a season of the year, *mensis* – a month, *dies* – a day, *quadrans* – the time of day, *hora* – an hour, *punctus* – a moment in an hour, *minutum* – “minute,” *pars* – a fragment of a “minute,” *momentum* – a moment in a minute, *ostentum* – an instant, our minute, *atomus* – the smallest, indivisible unit of time. The atom is 1/376th of an *ostentum*, which forms a sixtieth part of an hour, therefore according to our measurements it would last 0.16 second. It is compared to the swift bite of the viper. 564 atoms make a *momentum*, 1,504 constitute one *pars*, 2,256 one *minutum*, 5,640 one *punctus*, and 22,560 make one hour.

The concept of time divided into atoms is common in medieval Computus, the science of measuring time. It was introduced into the philosophical discourse by Peter Abelard (*Dialectica*). The smallest unit of time, *instans*, is not suitable for measuring and calculating time, because it is imperceptible. It merges past with future, determining the present. Though Abelard was unfamiliar with Aristoteles’s *Physics*, he read his other texts and the related text by Boëthius. He was aware of the conflict between the vision of time as a continuum and its divisibility. Aristotle argued that since two spatial points do not create a line, two neighboring points in time do not determine the duration of time. Because they are always somehow separated, even if it is a minimal passage of time, it is a fragment of time that can still be divided into smaller units. Continuous time cannot consist of fixed, indivisible units. The endless division of units produces fluid continuity without internal pauses. Otherwise, there could be no movement in time and space. In the “now” (the present moment) there is no movement; it takes place between the “now” from the past and the “now” from the future. “Now” is not a singular unit for constructing time, but a caesura between a happening in the past and in the future. If time was formed of various “nows,” it would have been deprived of movement, change, action. All “nows” have to merge into a single flow of time to enable the movement that is the foundation of all existence in the world. Abelard wrote that a continuum exists, when parts transform from one to another without any *breaks*. It may contain the basic, indivisible particle-atoms (*instantia*), but they are indivisible, which means that their additive sequence becomes continuous.

The reception of Aristotle’s *Physics* in the Latin West (Gerard of Cremona, c. 1175; Robert Grosseteste, c. 1230) stimulated a new debate about the continuity of time. Of key significance was the infinite divisibility of units – the core of the Aristotelian concept of the continuity of time and the expansion of space. In the fourteenth century, prominent scholars spoke against this concept, including Henry of Harclay and Walter Chatton

from the University of Oxford, and Gerardus Odonis (Gérard d'Odon) and Nicolas Bonet from Paris. Arguing for the construction of space from points, they defended the atomic structure of time: *continuum* is formed of *indivisibilia*, indivisible microelements of time, termed, after Abelard, *instantia*. According to Chatton, between the current and subsequent “now,” or between every *instans*, there is no division of time, which can be continuously divided, as argued by Aristotle and his followers. In fact, one “now” is immediately followed by the next; when one indivisible moment (*instans*) passes, another one occurs. It means a constant shift from “this *instans* is” to “this *instans* does (no longer) exist.” The shift does not occur in the first *instans* because in that case it would both exist and not exist; nor in the second, temporarily removed from the first (as in Aristotle), because then it would be impossible to determine that it is, or that it is not. The shift occurs in the second *instans*, indivisible from the first; that is, one that occurs immediately after without any temporal boundaries. This is a rule of the direct adhesion of *instantia* on the axis of time, thus explaining its continuity, and its atomic structure. It enables the category of interchangeability to be introduced: movement and action in the space-time continuum.

Other fourteenth-century scholars from Oxford argued against the Atomists, including Thomas Bradwardine and Adam Wodeham, who favoured the concept of the infinite divisibility of time as *continuum successivum* (in contrast to the indivisible continuous space as *continuum permanens* – Bradwardine). Wodeham explained that the shift from *instans* to another *instans* cannot take place neither in the first or second *instans* divided from the first (as argued by Chatton), nor in the second indivisible from the first and following immediately after it, because there is no *instans* occurring immediately after, there are only general liminal points between past and future. Nicolas d'Autrecourt provided new arguments for the Atomists (*Tractatus universalis*, or *Exigit ordo*, c. 1330). The atoms of space and matter are discontinuous: formed of points. Therefore, time, linked with space, is formed of units. However, the movement is possible in time. It occurs between the indivisible *instantia*, because of the difference in the bodies' velocity, and not because of the period of time between the *instantia* (this, according to Aristotle, is always divisible). The different velocity of bodies is linked to the difference in the duration of the resting moments adopted by bodies in specific points of time. Only the fastest bodies – external celestial spheres – never experience the resting state and there is no faster movement than that. Other bodies are always located in a specific moment of rest between the movement, and this moment's duration is conditioned by the resistance of the environment in which they act, as well as by the disposition of the specific body, its weight. Uniformity of movement is illusory, in fact the movement is always an incremental change between *instantia*, which determine the points of momentarily rest. The shift in position from one

point to another in time always occurs with the same velocity, from *instans* to *instans*, therefore there are no actually faster or slower bodies, only longer or shorter resting moments. John Wycliff (*Tractatus de logica*, c. 1360) presented similar concepts in Oxford. The atomic structure of time is based on the immediate following of the *instantia*, and movement occurs through the adjacent position and surface of the body in a given *instansie* with the position in the next one. This is the logic of the earthly time, whereas God's eternity is the one and only *instans*, the eternal present, which does not move or change.

The fourteenth-century debate about the divisibility of time, confirmed its continuity and divisibility. It formed a theoretical foundation (more or less consciously) for the late medieval modes of narratives in literature and art, for which the divine and secular (earthly) course of events was an important issue. That is the issue of time and eternity. In the fifteenth century, Nicholas of Cusa (Nikolaus von Kues, Nicolaus Cusanus 1401–1464) developed these concepts in theological and philosophical terms.

The most versatile and profound German thinker of the fifteenth century focused upon, among other things, the origins of finite time and the world, as well upon the expansion of time, its limits, changeability, movement, the resting time and the measuring of time. For Nicholas of Cusa, the key issue was the relation between earthly time and the eternity discussed in his treatises *De aequalitate* and *De docta ignorantia*.⁴⁹⁰ Following St. Augustine (he was a Neoplatonist), Nicholas considered time as a mode of perceiving, through the soul, of both the world and the soul's role in the continuum of creation. Time is a matter of consciousness. Only a conscious mind can perceive time as "the present of things past in memory, the present of things future in expectation, and the present of things now in the judgment of reality" (Augustine, *Confessions*).⁴⁹¹ Thinking about time is not possible without the contemplation of a man. A man perceives time and its passing, experiences transience, but is protected from the experience of nothingness by the finite quality of time, by the perspective directed towards the end of the world. The end of time becomes a connection (*connexio*) of all temporalities, past, present and future, and all temporal divisions into a unity: the end of changeability and differentiation, and the beginning of the timelessness of God's eternity.

According to Nicholas of Cusa, the continuity of time is based on *visio temporis* – the perception of time, based on the conjunction of three

490 W. Knoch, "Nikolaus von Kues, Zeit und Ewigkeit," in: *Zeitkonzeptionen, Zeiterfahrung, Zeitmessung...*, pp. 103–116. See also N. Fischer, "Die Zeitbetrachtung des Nikolaus von Kues in *De aequalitate* ('In temporalne unitrinum tempus')," *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 99, 1990, pp. 170–192.

491 N. Fischer, *Die Zeitbetrachtung des Nikolaus von Kues...*, p. 178.

temporal modes: “When you see the future as the time past, you see that it happened in the present and will happen in the future.”⁴⁹² What happened in the past can occur in the present and in the future. And what we perceive as the present originated in the past, when it was present, and will be in the future as its present. However, this concept does not deny the specificity of time. The past is gone, and the future is not yet present. But if “there is time for everything,” that time is always present, seen by a human as past, present and future. A man (her/his soul) perceiving the time in three modes, establishes its continuity. It is *tempus contractum in temporalibus* – time as contracted to temporal things. The actual existence of time is not given to the soul: the past of finite things does not exist here and now, the present remains reduced to itself, and the future is still ahead. The human soul (consciousness) perceives time and combines in itself its three modes, dividing the past and future from the present, and at the same time linking it together. In human perception of time, there is no past or future without the present, and the present without the past or future. This is *unitrinum tempus*, the triunity of time, that occurs in *tempus intemporeale*, timeless time. This allows us to distinguish earthly time from eternity. In establishing connection between the three times, the soul attains the horizon of eternity, *in horizonte aeternitatis*, without losing its contact with earthly time and space. The eternity of God requires earthly temporality.

The unity of three times explains the movement and changeability in the world. Time, formed *ex nihil* at the beginning of the world and leading to its end, is filled with change, an implied continuous shift of past into present and future (and vice versa) that takes place in the soul. The changeability of time is the issue pertaining to the self-consciousness of people. It constitutes the time of *temporalities*. The soul is *tempus perfectum, similitudo aeternitatis*, a reflection of the ideal eternity, the “timeless time” of God. The soul, in the mutability of the human condition, desires the moment of rest: the bliss of eternity. This is the sense and the goal of its actions, movement over the course of time. It stimulates its creative potential to design future from the past in the present. Thanks to the soul any temporality attains the level of timelessness, the horizon of eternity. Past, present and future are preserved in the soul and referenced to the eternal being: the past continues in the present, the future originates in the past, located in the soul as the perfect time. Every temporal event has a timeless meaning for the soul.

In this eschatological perspective the tripartite structure of time corresponds to the Holy Trinity, as an analogy to the co-equality of the divine three persons: the modes of time are co-equal, though they are unified in

492 Nicolaus Cusanus, *De aequalitate*, 16.

eternity. Just as in the Holy Trinity the Son of God mediates between God the Father, the Creator and the Spirit-Maker, so Christ mediates between time and eternity. The incarnation and the earthly life of the God-Man in time introduced God's plan and the eternal dimension into earthly time. The *Logos*, the preexisting Son, constitutes *supra tempus cunctis prior existens*. The Nativity brought about God's existence in time. His sacrifice in the act of salvation established a perspective of all future events that will be fulfilled and concluded in the Parousia, the second coming of Christ on Judgment Day, when temporality will end, and only eternity will remain.

In his sermon on 6th January 1456 Cusanus preached: "Consider this: the place of time is eternity or [the perpetual] "now;" the place of movement is rest; the place of a number is singleness, and so on. What is the meaning of time besides the present moment? As time flows, its current shifts from being to being [from one being to another]. This entity is only present, that is "now." It is said that from all time we can only make use of "now," and there are now other "nows," as it is singular. And "now" can never shift to the past, just as it is impossible to say about the future that it is now. Therefore, the "now" from and to which all time flows is the essence and sense of time, and we call it presentness [being "today"], or eternity [being "today" and "now"], or a moment that happens "now," which always remains unmoved. Consequently, the eternal "now" is eternity itself or simply being [entity], with the entity of time, that is, the eternal God, who is eternity. We call eternity that beginning and the final goal of being itself, and also the place of time."⁴⁹³ In this way Cusanus breaks the cyclical model of time with the linear axis of eternity, established between the timelessness before the creation of the world, and the timelessness at the end of the world: the eternity that he called the extraspatial place of time.

It is the place of earthly time designated to fulfil the time of the Incarnation, the time of Jesus Christ, who mediates between God and the world, God and a man, eternity and temporality. The metaphor from the

493 Sermo CLXVI: "Ubi est qui natus est rex Iudaeorum," in: *Cusanus-Texte*, I: *Predigten*, Heidelberg 1929, no. 2/5. Cf. E. Brient, "Meister Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa on the 'Where' of God," in: *Nicholas of Cusa and his Age: Intellect and Spirituality*, ed. by T. M. Izbicki, C.M. Bellito, Leiden 2002, pp. 127–150; C.L. Miller, "Meister Eckhart in Nicholas of Cusa's 1456 Sermon: Ubi est qui natus est rex Iudeorum," in: *Nicholas of Cusa and his Age...*, pp. 105–125; C.L. Miller, *Reading Cusanus: Metaphor and Dialectic in a Conjectural Universe*, Washington 2003; C. Catà, "Die paradoxe Frage der drei Weisen – die Idee des Unum infinitum im Sermo CCXVI des Nikolaus von Kues," *Coincidentia* 1–2, 2010, pp. 13–22. The Cusanus' quotation translated by Zuzanna Sarnecka, based on the traduction of Clyde Lee Miller (http://www.sunysb.edu/philosophy/faculty/cmiller/articles/cmiller_ubi.pdf).

Gospel of St. John— Christ as the way (the truth, the life)—is linked with the metaphor of St. Paul, according to whom we humans are all pilgrims (*homo viator*). Every human being has “in the place of his time” a specific road to follow, a path to eternity. Life is a time of pilgrimage. Embarking out of necessity on one’s journey, the pilgrim can only follow the path to the end; by continuing down the road he/she changes nothing in the outside world. The road lacks – paradoxically – movement, changeability, and action. The pilgrim is a pilgrim because of their chosen life path; s/he travels along down the road, following its direction, towards its goal. The road is irreversible, immutable, just like Christ’s fate on earth, from His departure from eternity to His return to its timeless state.

Therefore, for Cusanus time is the dimension of experiencing eternity by humans through Christ. This experiencing is simultaneously seeing— *visio*, that is, a perception of time and space through things in the world, leading, after the Judgment Day, to the spiritual seeing of God in eternity.

The time of medieval philosophers and that of medieval artists were not identical. I decided to include the discussion of the former because it is interesting. However, it was not a basis or a direct point of reference for presenting narrative in art. The fact that scholars and philosophers analysed in detail the nature of time proves that the concept was not simple and obvious, or strictly governed by the liturgical order and natural rhythm. Philosophers debated the issue of time and artists independently constructed various times through their sequences of images. At times, these two discourses on time aligned and became strikingly similar.

The academic debate about the continuous and atomic nature of time, or the theological theory of Nicholas of Cusa, were not popular in the artistic milieu of the day.⁴⁹⁴ They belonged to the philosophical discourse of intellectual elites. However, they were linked to the common experience of time, immersed in the everyday religious life, and as such they influenced the appearance of altarpieces. Cusanus’s theory of time described the existence of two temporal axes: the vertical (theological time), which determined the connection between eternity and temporality, and the horizontal (historic time), with its linear flow of earthly events. This connection was reflected in large-scale, multi-panel altarpieces, where the two perspectives overlapped through the procedure of opening and closing the wings. Wings and panels with iconic or devotional images visualised timeless eternity. The hieratical depictions of sainthood illustrated eternal dogmas, unchanged by time, or they highlighted the moments when eternity connected to current, earthly

494 For the connections between Cusanus’s philosophy and fifteenth-century painting see essays in: *Kann das Denken malen? Philosophie und Malerei in der Renaissance*, ed. by I. Bocken, T. Borsche, Munich 2010.

time, frequently imagined as visions. In turn, the detailed narrative cycles on their side panels captured the impression of the particular division of earthly time, with its units and continuity, as if following the philosophical theory of temporal atomism.

The closed *Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck [fig. 28] shows earthly time.⁴⁹⁵ We see contemporary events – the prayers of the mortal patrons, Jodocus Vijd and Elisabeth Borluut, directed at the stone figures of John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. The stone quality of the saints underlines that they are part of the plan of the past. Above, the divine plan enters into earthly time: the scene of the Annunciation, the moment when God became man. The scene is depicted in muted colours, and is therefore semi-monochromatic (*semi-grisaille*). The open altarpiece attracts the viewer's attention with its wide range of colours and reveals the image of the Heavenly Jerusalem with hieratic figures of God-Christ, angels, the first parents of mankind and crowds of saints. Time is not flowing, but lasts, with the plan of sacred history (the history of salvation) suggested via the movement between the Original Sin (Adam and Eve) to man's salvation through Christ's sacrifice (the Lamb of God in the central, lower panel). The opening of the polypych meant a shift from the present moment to the eternity of the Heavenly Kingdom.

The *St. Mary Altarpiece* by Veit Stoss [figs. 527–528] includes a very clear vertical axis that joins earthly time, with its detailed narrative on the closed and open wings, with the timelessness of eternity.⁴⁹⁶ The axis is directed upwards: from earth (the Dormition of the Virgin), through the space that shifts from the earthly to the heavenly realm (the Assumption), to the scene of the Coronation in the crowning, separated from earthly time and space. In the *Altarpiece of Sankt Wolfgang* by Michael Pacher, the Coronation, shown in a heavenly realm, fills the shrine [figs. 292–294].⁴⁹⁷ During the opening the scene was preceded with the narrative of historic time, with its sequence and continuity shown on the wings (the life of St. Wolfgang, and the lives of Christ and the Virgin). Below the shrine, the narrative scenes were included in the predella (the Adoration of the Magi) and in the crowning (the Crucifixion). Through this specific placement, the Coronation of the Virgin, the visualisation of God's and the saints' presence in Heaven, became the centre of the programme, extracted from temporality, from the linear flow of time, but at the same time strictly connected with it.

495 Cf. note 376.

496 For the Cracow retable see notes 186 and 455.

497 See note 53.



Fig. 548: Hans Schüchlin (?) for the Workshop of Jörg Syrlin the Elder, the design drawing (*Visierung*) of the ratable of the main altar from the city church in Ulm, 1473, Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum

Traditional German altarpieces highlighted the shift from the narrative, with its episodes and atomic time, to the hieratic continuity of the timeless. Their shrines included static and symmetrically distributed groups of five monumental statues of saints, which depicted the doctrine of the intercession of the saints in heaven; the wings illustrated the detailed narrative of the earthly, *historia sacra* in the Christological and Marian cycles and in episodes from the lives of saints. Numerous examples include the *Altarpiece from Landsberg* by Hans Multscher (1437; preserved *in situ* in

a fragmentary state), or the dispersed main altarpiece from the Minster in Ulm sculpted by Jörg Syrlin the Elder (1473) known from the workshop drawing by Hans Schüchlin (drawing in Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum) [fig. 548]. Others include the *Altarpiece from Kefermarkt* probably by Martin Kriechbaum (1490–1498) [fig. 307] or the *Altarpiece in Blaubeuren* by Michael and Gregor Erhart, Bartholomäus Zeitblom and Bernhard Strigel (1493–1494) [fig. 298].

The perspective of eternity entering earthly time was at stake in any donor portraits in illuminated manuscripts or panel paintings with a devotional and commemorative function. To give just one example: a pair of miniatures from the *Hours of Étienne Chevalier* (after 1452–c. 1460, Chantilly, Musée Condé) depicts the donor adoring the Virgin and Child, surrounded by angels, set in the golden architecture that typically indicates the Heavenly Jerusalem [fig. 549].⁴⁹⁸ Time has become suspended through the act of perpetual adoration of the divine by a mortal, who had entered into the realm of the saved.



Fig. 549: Jean Fouquet, *Étienne Chevalier Adoring the Virgin and Child*, two illuminations from the *Hours of Étienne Chevalier*, after 1452 – c. 1460, Chantilly, Musée Condé, ms. 71, fol. 201–202

498 *The Hours of Étienne Chevalier* by Jean Fouquet: Ch. Sterling, C. Schaefer, *Les Heures d'Étienne Chevalier de Jean Fouquet*, Paris 1971; F. Avril, *Les grandes chroniques de France. Reproduction intégrale en fac-similé des miniatures de Fouquet. Manuscrit français 6465 de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*,

Philosophers and theologians, such as Nicholas of Cusa, also described the merging of two temporal dimensions. Linear, earthly time and the eternal duration of the heavenly realm was deeply ingrained into the medieval mentality. People's sense and perception of time was as a sequence of events, considered in the present, keeping the future in mind, and always in reference to eternity. This concept of time formed the basis of confession, understood as a moment of retrospection, a recognition of one's sins and good deeds in hope of future salvation. It is documented in the contemporary texts of confessions.⁴⁹⁹

The medieval lives of saints [fig. 550] functioned between the linear sequence of events, closed within a single human lifetime, (the "now" in the described past), and the divine eternal plan, which merges with the earthly realm in special moments such as visions, miracles or acts of particular piety on the part of the protagonist. These hagiographic texts use a specific narrative, both linear, sequential and subordinate to the vertical axis. The saints' infancy and adolescence are devoted to religious studies (for instance St. Hedwig) or entirely secular in character (St. Francis). These early stages constitute a linear past important for future adulthood, filled with pious deeds, acts of good will and miraculous events. The biographers are interested in the saint's adult life that forms a part of the divine plan and as such is immersed in God's time. They describe the saint's life as present in the series of constant revelations of God's will, who intervenes in human life; it is the presence of the eternal God in earthly time. In the instances of the divine intervention, the saint becomes alienated from their temporality. The narrator of the *Legenda maior* of St. Hedwig highlights her spiritual exercises that last the entire day and night, periods of fasting, or prayers in search of contact with God, that break away from the rhythm of everyday life.⁵⁰⁰ God

Paris 1987; G. Bazin, *Jean Fouquet. Le livre d'heures d'Étienne Chevalier*, Paris 1990; P. Stirnemann, *Les Heures d'Étienne Chevalier par Jean Fouquet. Les quarante enluminures du Musée Condé*, Paris 2003; F. Avril et al., *Jean Fouquet. Peintre et enlumineur...*, cat. no. 24; N. Reynaud, *Jean Fouquet. Les Heures d'Étienne Chevalier*, Dijon 2006; E. König, "Étienne Chevalier als Auftraggeber Jean Fouquets," in: *Jean Fouquet – das Diptychon von Melun*, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, ed. by S. Kemperdick, Petersberg 2017, pp. 60–69.

499 T. Ehlert, "Lebenszeit und Heil: Zwei Beispiele für Zeiterfahrung in der deutschsprachigen Literatur des Mittelalters," in: *Zeitkonzeptionen, Zeiterfahrung, Zeitmessung. Stationen ihres Wandels vom Mittelalter bis zur Moderne*, ed. by T. Ehlert, Paderborn–Munich–Vienna–Zurich 1997, pp. 256–273, especially pp. 258–266 (chapter II: *Muster der Zeiterfahrung als Sediment in altdeutschen Beichten*).

500 *Vita beatae Hedwigis: Der Hedwig-Codex von 1353, Sammlung Ludwig* [now Getty Museum, Los Angeles], ed. W. Braunfels, Berlin 1972; *Legenda*

“descends” to her from eternity; the biography refers to “visits” paid by God or the Beloved (Christ). The present condition of a mortal woman joins with the eternal “now” of God, and her life no longer follows earthly time. The text describes this as an arrest of biological time, of the natural course of action, of the sleep/wake cycle, and of the rhythm of meals. Hedwig, consumed by her prayers to God, does not sleep, wakes up during the night, ignores the moment of sunrise (which typically indicates the beginning of prayer for the nuns and other devotees); when she reads the Bible and devotional books at the table she forgets about her food. Her time becomes a continuum, or a unity, an eternal “now,” just like divine timelessness. The experience of God’s timeless present (of eternity) can be interpreted as a prophetic understanding of the future. Hedwig, and other saints, (thanks to God’s revelation) knows her near and distant future, and gains insight into the perspective of eternity, that includes the past, the present and the future. This dichotomy of time-timelessness informs our understanding of the *St. Hedwig Triptych* from Wrocław discussed above (see chapter IV.5).⁵⁰¹

świętej Jadwigi / Vita beate Hedwigis (Maior legenda de beata Hedwigi), ed. by J. Pater, Wrocław 1993; Th. Kren, *Illuminated Manuscripts of Germany and Central Europe in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, Los Angeles 2009, pp. 24–25, 31–33, 82–85. See also: T. Ehlert, “Die Heilige Hedwig in der deutschen Literatur des Spätmittelalters und frühen Neuzeit,” in: *Księga Jadwizańska. Międzynarodowe sympozjum naukowe: Święta Jadwiga w dziejach i kulturze Śląska*, (Wrocław–Trzebnica 1993), ed. by K. Bobowski, M. Kaczmarek et al., Wrocław 1995, pp. 154–175, especially pp. 159–164; *Das Bild der heiligen Hedwig in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. E. Grunewald, N. Gussone, Munich 1996; T. Ehlert, *Lebenszeit und Heil...*, pp. 267–273 (chapter III: *Zeiterfahrung in hoch- und spätmittelalterlichen Heiligen- und Nonnenviten*).

501 See note 441.



Fig. 550: Workshop of the Master of Langendorf / Wielowieś, *Triptych of St. Hedwig* from the church of the Holy Spirit (?) in Breslau/Wrocław, c. 1440, Warsaw, National Museum – wings

This perspective becomes apparent in the visions of numerous mystic saints and hermits, removing them temporarily from temporality. These moments are described as illumination by eternal light, as a gap in earthly time and space that reveals the eternal world. An infinite number of representations of visions corresponds with this concept of time and timelessness: the Tiburtine Sybil before Caesar Augustus; St. Bridget of Sweden; St. Francis; St. Catherine; St. John the Evangelist on Patmos; St. Gregory the Great, St. Ildefonsus, St. Hubert, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Benedict, St. Augustine, as well as widely disseminated images of adoring, meditating and contemplating donors, who

gain insight into the heavenly realm (for instance, the *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin* and *Madonna van der Paele* by Jan van Eyck).⁵⁰²

V.3. Long story – continuous space: the episodic, simultaneous, segmented and disrupted narrative

Three painted altarpieces illustrate the characteristic modes of time found in fifteenth-century painting.

The first example is the *St. Columba Altarpiece* by Rogier van der Weyden (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) [fig. 551].⁵⁰³ The panels depict from the left: *The Annunciation*, *The Adoration or the Magi*, and *The Presentation at the Temple*. The narrative is linear, with a clear chronological order that matches the sequence of episodes described in the Gospels. However, it is also disrupted, depicting only three key episodes from the life of the Virgin and Christ's childhood, which show the theophany, the revelation of God on earth. These are the moments (*kairoi*), that announce the future Passion of Christ: the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and the Incarnation during the Annunciation; the Adoration of the Magi in the central scene and the recognition of the Messiah through Simeon's prophecy about the coming of the Saviour during the Presentation at the Temple. Other episodes were omitted to adhere to the tripartite format of the triptych. To minimize the shock of this disrupted narrative, Rogier unified the composition of individual panels through the frieze-like figurative scenes in the foreground, with their rhythm of vertical figures. In the middle ground,

502 C. Harbison, *Visions and meditations...*

503 About the narrative and semantics of the *Columba Altarpiece* by Rogier van der Weyden see: A. Acres, "The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World," *The Art Bulletin* 80, 1998, pp. 422–451; See also: his, "Small Physical History: The trickling past of Early Netherlandish painting," in: *Symbols of Time in the History of Art*, ed. Ch. Heck, K. Lippincott, Turnhout 2002, pp. 7–25. Further bibliography: De Vos Rogier 1999, cat. no. 21 (with literature till 1997); C. Harbison, "Visions and meditations...", pp. 96–97, 101, 116; A. Acres, "The Columba Altarpiece and the time of the world," *The Art Bulletin* 80, 1998, pp. 422–451; Kemperdick Rogier 1999/2007, pp. 77–83; B. Rothstein, "Vision, cognition, and self-reflection in Rogier van der Weyden's Bladelin Triptych," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 64, 2001, no. 1, pp. 37–55; his, *Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting*, Cambridge University Press 2005; H. Schlie, *Bilder des Corpus Christi...*, pp. 115–121; S. Kemperdick, *I tableau à II hysseiores – ein Bild mit zwei Flügeln...*, pp. 127–130; T.-H. Borchert, "The image of Charles the Bold," in: *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, pp. 73–81, especially pp. 80–81; L. Campbell, "The workshop of Rogier van der Weyden," in: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, pp. 113–116; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 252–254 and 292–292; E.C. Pastan, "Representing architecture in the altarpiece. Fictions, strategies, and mysteries," in: *Quid est sacramentum?...*, pp. 227–260.

he developed a view into three vast spaces: the domestic interior, the landscape and the inside of a church. The time of theophany – as a moment (*kairos*) of the revelation of eternity in temporality – is reflected in all the aspects of a human life: private life at home, public life in the outside realm (*negotium*), and spiritual life in the institutionalised Church. The pillar above the Christ Child and the Virgin’s head is roughly the focal point of the orthogonal lines (though not the vanishing point). This element, immediately below the crucifix, a symbol of the future Passion of Christ and man’s salvation, is an addition from a different temporal order, a different realm. This inwardness of the composition is highlighted by the diagonal orientation of the spaces depicted in the side panels. The scene of the Adoration of the Magi (with the youngest magus potentially being a crypto-portrait of Charles the Bold) is depicted as a contemporary event: a courtly ceremony full of splendour, a highly orchestrated act of paying homage and a celebratory donation of gifts. It once again brings metaphysical revelation to the earthly realm and highlights the *hic et nunc* of sacred history.⁵⁰⁴

In the linear, horizontal narrative, the crucifix determines the goal of current (framed as present) events. It suggests the *futurum* of the depicted fragment of sacred history; that is, Christ’s sacrifice, which gave humanity the chance of salvation, and became at the same time the point of reference for every scene.



Fig. 551: Rogier van der Weyden, *St. Columba Altarpiece*, c. 1450–1451, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek

The altarpiece includes three temporalities. The first, eternal timelessness, and the second, historic, evangelical time, with the narrative of the Incarnation and salvation; the third is the current, contemporary time of the viewer. Each of these modes can constitute past, present or future times for another mode.

504 T.-H. Borchert, “The Image of Charles the Bold,” in: *Charles the Bold (1433–1477): Splendour of Burgundy*, pp. 80–81.

In other words, the aim of the visual representation is the well-thought-out rhetoric of imagined time, and the manipulation of it. This serves to enable the reconciliation of different modes of the viewing and experiencing of time within the complete history of salvation, in which the viewer should find and define one's place: their chronological position. Time is not depicted in the work but established by the viewer through their position in, and in relation to, the painting. It means that the viewer is both a witness to and a participant in sacred history (this *historia sacra*), which motivates them to meditation upon its course and meaning. The beholder during this visual journey has to access the time and space of the painting.

The clearly distinctive topography of space informs the sequence of events: the *Annunciation*, the *Adoration of the Magi* and *The Presentation at the Temple*. Each panel illustrates different places: Nazareth in the *Annunciation*, Bethlehem in the *Adoration of the Magi*, and Jerusalem in the *Presentation at the Temple*. However, in this segmented narrative there are points that link the neighboring stages and places of the story. These spatial tricks suggest interventions of other units of time: transitions between two narrative modes. The domestic interior in the panel of the *Annunciation*, which takes place in Nazareth, seems to be an open space of one of the houses of a vast city, depicted near the left edge of the panel of the *Adoration* in Bethlehem. A similar break of chronological and spatial boundaries is suggested in the right edge of the central panel. The *Adoration of the Magi* takes place in Bethlehem, but the facade of the church seen at an angle (the place where the Presentation happens) belongs to the temple in Jerusalem (this connection may have been inspired by Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*, which describes how it was the star of the Annunciation that brought the three Magi to Jerusalem and then dimmed, leaving the Magi to continue their journey to Bethlehem without its guidance). The striking discontinuity of the narrative is softened by the trick of introducing motifs from the side panels to the central scene. This solution establishes a link of continuity in the disrupted narrative. It speaks of the continuity of the lives of the saints, syncretized with moments of recurring revelation.

The sequence of the temporal modes is clear here. The *Annunciation* is an anacrusis and the announcement of the birth of Christ as the King of Kings, to whom humanity yields and pays tribute (*The Adoration of the Magi*). The Annunciation is a past event in relation to the Adoration, which, as the central scene of the open triptych, determines the present moment for the beholder. Moreover, the Adoration anticipates the Presentation at the Temple. From the viewer's perspective, the *Adoration of the Magi* establishes the present moment in relation to the *Presentation at the Temple*. However, in reality all three scenes belong to the past; they form *praeteritum* (past events, actions taking place in the past) or *perfectum* (completed history, observed from the perspective of here and now).

In the central panel, on the wall of the stable above the pillar, hangs a crucifix: a foreshadowing of future events from the perspective of Christ's childhood, and, at the same time, of past history from the viewer's position. This trace is linked with the star above the stable, which in the past announced the birth of Christ to the Magi, and now, depicted as the sun covered by clouds and wrapped in the darkening sky, becomes an index of future events: of Christ's Crucifixion and the moment of His death, which brought darkness in the heavens and on the earth. The time of the Incarnation and Nativity merges with the *futurum* of the Passion and man's salvation.

Historic time (the biblical events of the Incarnation and man's salvation), together with moments of revelation highlighting the divine plan, became integrated with the time of the viewer – the actual present moment. In the central panel, the donor, an outsider of the biblical narrative, is separated from the group of the Virgin, Christ and the Magi by a wall and an opening in the ground (access to a crypt, a symbol of the future Holy Tomb). The donor personifies the viewer in the space and time of the Biblical scene. In the background, in the vast landscape, there are contemporary travellers on the road to see the birthplace of Christ. On the right wing, inside the temple-church, a beggar extends his hat towards the entering man, asking for alms; on the outside another beggar sits on a wall. These two figures also belong to the time and space of the viewer.

For the viewer, the donor and the contemporaries the *historia sacra* constitutes the past, and their time is the future for these events, in which the prophecy of salvation is fulfilled. The conflation of times in the common space of the picture suggests to the viewer that the world oscillates and migrates between evangelical history and the present moment, and vice versa. The viewer has to embark on a spiritual journey to biblical times. Such perception was in line with St. Augustine's view that the entire *historia sacra* develops not in the past, present and future times, but in the present time of the past, present and future things. The viewer examining Rogier's triptych, understands the *praesens* of the past as memory (*memoria*); the *praesens* of the now as the perception of the events visualized, and the *praesens* of the future as the awaiting of one's salvation. The *St. Columba Altarpiece* shows atomic, segmented time that forms a continuous historic narrative, with earthly points of contact with divine eternity and the presence of the believer-viewer inscribed in it.



Fig. 552: Aert van den Bossche, *The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian*, 1490–1494, central panel – Warsaw, The Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów; right wing, recto – Brussels, Musée de la Ville, Maison du Roi/Broodhuis Museum



Fig. 553: Aert van den Bossche, *The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian*, right wing, verso, Moscow, The Pushkin Museum

The *Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian* by Aert van den Bossche shows another mode of temporal narrative (Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Warsaw). Apart from the central painting, only the panels from the right wing have come down to us (Musée de la Ville and the Pushkin Museum, Moscow) [figs. 552–553].⁵⁰⁵ The altarpiece was commissioned in 1490 by the Guild of the Shoemakers in Brussels for their chapel in the local Franciscan church (and later in the church of St. Nicolas); according to the payment records, it was executed in 1494.

The altarpiece narrates the lengthy and complex martyrdom of twin brothers, Christians from a noble Roman family of the third century C.E., who escaped the persecutions of the Emperors Diocletian and Maximian, and then hid in Gaul, in present-day Soissons. They became shoemakers

505 Aert van den Bossche, *Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian*: K. Secomska, "‘Martyrium SS. Crispini et Crispiniani MM’ et un tableau néerlandais du début du XVI^e siècle," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 6, 1965, pp. 5–16; J. Białostocki, *Les musées de Pologne... (Corpus...)*, no. 113, pp. 1–16; N. Veronée-Verhaegen in: M.J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 4, 1969, Add.163; A. Janssens de Bisthoven et al., *Primitifs flamands anonymes. Maîtres aux noms d'emprunt des Pays-Bas méridionaux du XV^e et du début du XVI^e siècle* (Netherlandish edition: *Anonyme Vlaamse Primitieven...*), exh. cat., Groeningemuseum, Bruges 1969, cat. no. 47; N. Reynaud, J. Foucart, "Exposition Primitifs flamands anonymes," *Revue de l'Art* 8, 1970, pp. 66–72; J. Białostocki, M. Skubiszewska, *Malarstwo francuskie, niderlandzkie i włoskie do 1600*, coll. cat., Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, Warsaw 1979, cat. no. 84; A.M. Bonenfant-Feytmans, "Aert van den Bossche: peintre de polyptyque des saints Crépin et Crépinien," *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie* 13, 1991, pp. 43–58; D. De Vos, "À propos du Retable des saints Crépin et Crépinien. Les deux volets méconnus du musée des Beaux-Arts de Moscou," *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie, Bruxelles* 13, 1991, pp. 33–42; C. Périer-d'Ieteren, "Le 'Retable du Martyre des saints Crépin et Crépinien' et le Maître de la Légende de sainte Barbe," *Bulletin Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* (1989–1991) 1992, pp. 157–174; C. Périer-d'Ieteren, "Contributions to the Study of the Melbourne Triptych, II: The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, The Raising of Lazarus, The Rest on the Flight into Egypt and St. Peter," *The Art Bulletin of Victoria* 34, 1994, pp. 5–24; N. Toussaint, J. Dijkstra, "Les petits maîtres de la fin du XV^e siècle," in: B. de Patoul, R. van Schoute (eds.), *Les primitifs flamands et leur temps* (Netherlandish edition: *De Vlaamse primitieven*), Louvain-la-Neuve 1994, pp. 524–561; D. Martens, "Des nouvelles d'Aert van den Bossche," *Annales de la Société Royale d'Archéologie de Bruxelles* 62, 1998, pp. 5–8; *Sztuka cenniejsza niż złoto. Obrazy, rysunki i ryciny dawnych mistrzów europejskich ze zbiorów polskich*, ed. by A. Ziemia, A. Kozak, exh. cat., the National Museum in Warsaw, Warsaw 1999, cat. no. 17; D. Martens, "Un témoin méconnu de la peinture bruxelloise de la fin du Moyen Age. Le Triptyque de saint Hippolyte

giving their products away for free to the newly converted. The chronological order of scenes directs the viewer's gaze, zigzagging from the landscape in the background on the left, almost to the first plane, before the curtain of rocks, to a recess, and then again coming forward to the centre of the foreground, before again moving backwards to the top of the rock and towards the landscape. On the left in the background the two brothers refuse to bow before a pagan idol; they are arrested and taken through the town to the place of their martyrdom. After this, as shown between the middle ground and the foreground, the brothers are tied to a tree and beaten with clubs. In the foreground, we see a lumberjack carving these from the branches. The next stage is depicted in the background, with the torturers pushing awls (the attribute of the shoemakers) under the martyrs' nails. After that scene, the gaze returns to the front, towards the central scene. Here we notice a motif, which derives from an earlier episode – one of the torturers cowers on the ground, stricken by the awls, which miraculously, through divine intervention, sprang out of the victims' bodies and pierced through his head, arms, and body. However,

au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Boston," *Revue belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art* 69, 2000, pp. 59–112, especially p. 86; G. Steyaert, "De triptiek met de Marteling van de heilige Hippolytus, begonnen door Dirk Bouts en afgewerkt door Hugo van der Goes en zijn leering of medewerker, Aert van den Bossche," in: *Florissant. Bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis der Nederlanden (15de–17de eeuw)*, ed. by A. Balis, P. Huvenne et al., Brussels 2005, pp. 51–63; F. Gombert, D. Martens, *Le Maître au Feuillage brodé. Primitifs flamands. Secrets d'ateliers*, exh. cat., Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille, Paris 2005, cat. no. 12; F. Gombert, "'Un peintre paysagiste?' and 'Un réseau de collaborations d'artistes,'" in: *Le Maître au Feuillage brodé...*, pp. 21–27, especially pp. 24–25, and respectively pp. 29–37, especially pp. 30–31; G. Steyaert, "The Master of the Embroidered Foliage and Aert van den Bossche," in: *Le Maître au Feuillage brodé. Démarches d'artistes et méthodes d'attribution d'oeuvres à un peintre anonyme des anciens Pays-Bas du XVe siècle*, (colloque Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille 2005), ed. by F. Gombert, D. Martens, Lille 2007, pp. 173–183; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 390–393; *De erfenis van Rogier van der Weyden. De schilderkunst in Brussel 1450–1520* (in English: *The Heritage of Rogiera van der Weyden: Painting in Brussels 1450–1520*), ed. by V. Bücken, G. Steyaert, exh. cat., Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels 2013, pp. 246–253 and cat. no. 53; A. Ziemba, "Time and Place in a Story Told by a Painting. The Jerusalem Triptych from Gdańsk: Issues of Narration and Iconography," *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie. Nowa seria / Journal of the National Museum in Warsaw. New Series* 2(38), 2013, pp. 285–304, especially pp. 297–299; H. Benesz, M. Kluk, *Early Netherlandish, Dutch, Flemish and Belgian Paintings 1494–1983 in the Collections of the National Museum in Warsaw and the Palace at Nieborów. Complete Illustrated Summary Catalogue*, Warsaw 2016, cat. no. 78.

it is the following moment of the saints' martyrdom that constitutes the central scene of the altarpiece: tied to a tree, which functions as the central axis of the painting, the brothers are being skinned alive, with Rictiovarus, the prefect of Gaul, standing on the left-hand side. From that scene our gaze is again drawn to the back, to a frozen pond upon which townspeople ice skate and play hockey, and to a rock depicted above it (analogous to the one on the left hand side; they frame the view of the background), from which the brothers are meant to be pushed into the water, which freezes through divine intervention so that the victims will not drown. One brother gets out of the pond and onto the shore, whilst the second hangs from the cliff, but pushing him down does not make sense anymore. The viewer is then invited to return to the foreground with the second cavalcade, that of the emperor Maximian, witnessing the martyrdom. Subsequently, the viewer's attention is drawn to the background, where between the hills the saints are boiled in melted lead; but apparently this torture was also ineffective. Our gaze continues to the right wing, formed of two panels. The first panel in the middle ground shows the two brothers boiled in a cauldron filled with oil, but the figure of the angel flying away suggests divine intervention, which protects the martyrs from death. The drops of oil coming from the cauldron burn the torturers; one of them falls to the ground. The second panel depicts their death by beheading in the foreground. The story continues in the background with the saints' burial. We can only assume that the dispersed panels of the left wing, which initiated the narrative, included earlier episodes from the life of the brothers – their activity in Soissons in the shoemakers' workshop (as the image of the patron saints of the guild).

The composition shows a well-thought out and sophisticated spatial structure. The image is an example of a rich and very lively historic narrative, framed as a paratheatrical story, as in the Passion and mystery plays enacted in early set designs composed of several "mansions." The work is a peculiar example of a panorama-painting, such as those painted by Memling (which will be discussed in the following chapter), transformed into a vast, continuous landscape, presented frontally. Organised in three planes – the frieze of large figures in the foreground, the rocky hills in the middle ground, and the frozen pond, view of the town, valley and hills in the background – the painting shows a vast landscape and constitutes the earliest example of a winter landscape in Netherlandish painting.

The narrative is continuous and simultaneous. Unlike in Rogier's painting, there are no shifts from past, historic time to the present moment of the viewer, nor hints at future events. Indeed, the narrative from a distant past is presented in a contemporary setting (the town, its inhabitants and

the ice skating), but this updating of historic events does not affect the continuity of the narrative and does not introduce any other time but the past. One could perhaps say that it is a continuous past tense, moved to the contemporary *entourage*, but the robes of the historic figures – the emperor, prefect and people from their cavalcades – are costumes: they are fantastic and imagined, freely archaic, not contemporary. The structure of the narrative is continuous, it is not fragmented or atomized; the shifts are not chronological and are only related to the spatial depiction of the episodes. However, it is not the space of the landscape that determines the narrative. The story unravels naturally and establishes a clear order of episodes.



Fig. 554: Netherlandish master and a workshop from Rhineland-Westphalia (active in Danzig/Gdańsk?), *Jerusalem Triptych* from the Priestly Brotherhood Chapel in the Our Lady Church in Gdańsk, c. 1497–1500, Warsaw, National Museum – closed triptych



Fig. 555: Netherlandish master and a workshop from Rhineland-Westphalia (active in Danzig/Gdańsk?), *Jerusalem Triptych* – open

A different mode of temporal narrative is introduced in the *Jerusalem Triptych* (Warsaw, National Museum) [figs. 554–555].⁵⁰⁶ The monumental work (138.5 × 396.8cm, with the predella 138.5 × 421.8cm) comes from the Jerusalem chapel of the Marian Church in Gdańsk, owned since 1497 by the priestly brotherhood of the Virgin Mary. The altarpiece was painted probably c. 1497–1500, but according to the last conservation report the work took place in two stages. Firstly an unknown Netherlandish or northern German master (from the Netherlandish-German border, or from the Rhineland) from the circle of influence of Dirk Bouts and his sons painted the wings and the landscape in the background of the central panel. After this his collaborator or another master from Rhineland or Westphalia completed the central panel and populated it with figurative scenes. The story begins, unusually, from the scenes on the open altarpiece, narrating the life of Christ from the Massacre of the Innocents to the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem, and concludes with the Passion depicted on the closed wings. Therefore, firstly, we see the final stages of the narrative in the closed altarpiece, and only subsequently when it is opened do the events which led to the Crucifixion unfold.

The author of the Gdańsk triptych opted for a different sequential narrative than those introduced by Rogier van der Weyden and Aert van den Bossche. Both artists created simultaneous narratives, but the former adopted various temporal shifts, constantly linking the past, present and future, with episodes set in fragmented scenery, while the latter followed a conventional, continuous narrative, depicted in a unified space. In turn, the author of the Gdańsk triptych, as we shall see, designed a fragmented narrative (like van der Weyden), but unified it through creating a parallel with the sacred space of mental pilgrimage.

506 *Jerusalem Triptych from the Marian Church in Gdańsk*: A. Kłoczowski, “Ołtarz z kościoła N.M. Panny w Gdańsku zwany Jerozolimskim,” in: *Późny gotyk. Studia nad sztuką, przełomu, średniowiecza i czasów nowych. Materiały sesji Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki*, Wrocław 1962, Warsaw 1965, pp. 298–304; A. Labuda, *Malarstwo tablicowe w Gdańsku w 2. poł. XV w.*, Warsaw 1979, pp. 91–104, 197–200, no. 48; A.S. Labuda, *Dzieła tworzone w Gdańsku w drugiej połowie XV i w początkach XVI wieku*, in: J. Domaśłowski, A.S. Labuda, A. Karłowska-Kamzowa, *Malarstwo gotyckie na Pomorzu Wschodnim*, Warsaw–Poznań 1990, pp. 135–138; *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce*, vol. I, (essay by A.S. Labuda, *Malarstwo tablicowe na Pomorzu Wschodnim*), p. 347; vol. II, p. 171; M. Kochanowska in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *Van Eyck tot Dürer...*, cat. no. 277; A. Ziemia, *Time and Place in a Story Told by a Painting...*, pp. 285–304, especially pp. 285–286 and 299–304; A. Ziemia, “Jerusalem Triptych,” in: *The Gallery of Medieval Art...*, no. IV.2.

The external surfaces of the wings, framed in a single row on both panels, depict, from the top in the background: *the Last Supper, the Agony in the Garden, the Arrest, Christ before the High Priest*; and then at the bottom, in the foreground: *The Flagellation, The Crowning of Thorns, Encountering Veronica on the Road to Calvary, the Crucifixion and the Entombment*. When the triptych is open we see from the left to right, from the foreground to the background, scenes on the left wing: *The Massacre of the Innocents; the Chase of Herod's Soldiers*; the legendary miracle of the field of wheat during the Holy Family's escape from the Holy Land; *The Flight into Egypt* (with the scenes of collapsing pagan idols on a narrow, added panel). The central panel displays the following scenes: *Christ among the Doctors, Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well, The Baptism of Christ, the Temptation of Christ*, and finally on the right wing: the *Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*, and in the back *Christ Cleansing the Temple*. The chronological narrative of the panels in the closed altarpiece continues from the background to the foreground, and in its open state it is reversed. It is clearly disrupted, with shifts occurring between the sequences of the continuous narrative. Between the Flight into Egypt and the teaching of Christ to the doctors at the age of twelve there is a big gap, and the three main episodes in the central panel do not follow the logic of correct biblical narrative: they have been chosen arbitrarily, and remain isolated, separated from the flow of narrative. At the same time, the chronological order is at times completely disrupted.

The episode with the miraculous field of wheat during the flight into Egypt is linked to the story that describes the Virgin asking a sower to say to Herod's soldiers, when asked about the whereabouts of Holy Family, that he saw them when he had sown seeds. Christ then miraculously turned the seeds to grown wheat, ready to be reaped. The next morning when the soldiers came and questioned the sower about the old man travelling with a woman and a child, he responded as instructed by the Virgin. His response to the men ignorant of Christ's miracle meant that the soldiers were tricked into thinking that they had passed by a long time ago. This miraculous episode should have concluded the story of the chase, but in the distance, we see a cavalcade. The painter shows a scene when the Holy Family, now unthreatened by the soldiers, turns to the right onto the road leading to Egypt, whilst a crowd of riders continues on the road to the left, to return to Jerusalem. This solution was important to keep the view of Jerusalem – of key importance to the altarpiece of the Jerusalem Chapel – as the setting of the figurative narrative. Hence the program's author included the episode of the return of the persecutors to Herod's capital, not shown independently in traditional iconography.

The scene of the *Temptation of Christ* is included after the *Meeting with the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well*, which is a clear break with biblical chronology. The author of the program wanted to give a prominent place to the scene by the well, when Christ reveals himself as the Messiah-Saviour and introduces a metaphor of the Water of Life. Moreover, he wanted to juxtapose the scene with the episodes shown above, in the back: the Baptism of Christ, and the scene of the Apostles bringing loaves of bread from Sychar, a city of Samaria. Water and bread – the water of the Baptism, the living water from Jacob's well and the bread carried by the Apostles, as a prefiguration of the priesthood – create a symbolic axis of the central part of the altarpiece. To the woman's words: "I know that Messiah is coming," Jesus responded: "I, the one speaking to you – I am he." This clear statement defines His presence in the sacraments (in Baptism and the Eucharist). The conferring of the sacraments, as one of a priest's main duties, was a suitable theme for an altarpiece for the members of a brotherhood of priests. Their role as the preachers of Christ's words is stressed in the scene of Christ among the Doctors, whilst the *Temptation of Christ* refers to the priests' role in fighting sin and the need to maintain the purity and virtue expected of them. Consequently, the priests should maintain the purity of the ritual and of the temple (in this case of the Marian Church in Gdańsk), which is stressed by the neighbouring scene on the right wing with *Christ Cleansing the Temple*. The three main scenes – shown as the three disputes – highlight the three roles and tasks of clerics: the priest, the preacher and the spiritual leader. They confirm that the proclaimed truth is the source of the faith and deeds of God's people, led by priests.

Grounded in the narrative about the life of Christ and of salvation, the central part of the altarpiece highlights the significance of preaching about the truths of faith, of the sacraments, of the daily struggle with sin and temptation. However, the narrative is treated selectively, with only some events represented; these are not the most widely known or typically included in Christological cycles. The narrative lacks the beginning of Christ's childhood, as there are no scenes from the Annunciation to the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi. Similarly, from Christ's public ministry key events are excluded, such as the Sermon on the Mount, and the healing and the raising of the dead. What is at stake is not the full and continuous Christological narrative.

In the *Jerusalem Triptych* the scenes are selected and organised according to geographical space. We have seen how the need to show the topographical setting of Jerusalem determined the inclusion of the motif of the return of Herod's soldiers in the narrative of the Flight into Egypt. The altarpiece forms a kind of map: it illustrates the imaginative topography of the Holy Land, and in it the topography of the crusaders' Kingdom of Jerusalem. The

idea of the new crusade is communicated through the heraldic program, developed in the coat-of-arms embedded on the internal panels of the wings. The coat of arms included belong to the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Holy Roman Empire (*Reich*) and the county of Cleves (though certainly the coat of arms of the Emperor Maximilian and of the Duchess Mary of Burgundy are not present, contrary to Andrzej Kłoczowski's belief expressed in his article from 1965). The heraldic program raises a question about the commission. Could the idea of the knightly crusade, aimed at reclaiming the Holy Land for Christianity and reviving the Kingdom of Jerusalem be of importance to the brotherhood of priests? Was it a joint commission that involved a member of the nobility or a patrician of para-knightly status and aspirations? Or perhaps the heraldry does not refer to the actual call to a crusade per se, but to a pilgrimage? Perhaps the painting is a handbook for Gdańsk patricians, to assist them in a mental pilgrimage to the Holy Land, thereby transforming them into "Christ's Knights" – *Milites Christiani*? Or perhaps (this has not been ruled out, although it is less likely) the altarpiece was not intended for the chapel of the church in Gdańsk, but was moved there from another location, having originally been commissioned by a knight or a duke (though in that case the priestly, sacramental theme developed in the central panel would become an oddity).

The scene of *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well* has also a missionary meaning: the Gospel of St. John describes how, following the meeting, the Samaritans living in Sychar adopted Christ's teaching and acknowledged Him as the Messiah. This could link the priestly theme with that related to a crusade or a pilgrimage, highlighting the priests' role in preparing the faithful for their devotional pilgrimage, through preaching, conferring the sacraments, and offering spiritual guidance.

Jerusalem and Judea create the setting for the Massacre of the Innocents, the Return of Herod's soldiers, Christ among the Doctors, the Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem, Christ Cleansing the Temple, and the Passion. Christ's Baptism at the bank of the Jordan river (which took place at Bethany beyond the Jordan in an unspecified village, according to the Gospel of St. John, 1:28) was probably set in a region neighboring Judea, as the Temptation of Christ immediately followed His Baptism. The scenes depicted on the left wing take place in Judea, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Only the central scene – Christ and the Samaritan Woman – has a different setting, because it takes place in Samaria. However, this episode, as I have suggested above, can be explained by the meaning of the altarpiece. The situation allows the author to create a panorama of Jerusalem and the region, thus providing scaffolding for the beholder's imagination – a network of topographical points, which are the specific goals of the penitent's mental pilgrimage. The pilgrimage to the places of memory (*loca*) occurs internally,

spiritually, and follows a path formed of specific meditative stages accessible through the agency of the painting, without physical access to the actual, distant space.

As a topographical vision of the Kingdom of Jerusalem the triptych refers to the institution of great pilgrimages (to the Holy Land, to Rome, and to Santiago de Compostela), described in the pilgrimage literature (I address this in detail in the following chapter). However, it certainly is not an 'illustration' of the itineraries, guides and written records from the pilgrimages to the Holy Land.⁵⁰⁷ The selection of the scenes corresponds with the holy sites and events described in these texts, though they do not always follow the same order.⁵⁰⁸ On the panels of the closed triptych we see the pilgrimage sites of Jerusalem: The Last Supper, which takes place in the Cenacle at the Mount Sion; the Agony in the Garden and the Arrest – at the Mount of Olives; Christ before the High Priest, the Flagellation and the Crowning with Thorns (again in the Sion area); the Meeting with Veronica on the Road to Calvary, the Crucifixion and the Entombment – on the road to Golgotha and on its hill (that is, on the Via Doloris and in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, in the Old Town of Jerusalem). On the left wing of the open triptych we see the pilgrim's route to Bethlehem: the Massacre of the Innocents, the Chase of Herod's soldiers, the miraculous growth of wheat, and the Flight into Egypt. In the central panel, we return to the City (as recommended by the system of itineraries, defined by the Jerusalem Franciscans who managed the flow of pilgrims), and in the scene of Christ among the Doctors we see the Temple of Solomon (in reality experienced only from the outside, because the building believed to have been the historic site, the Mosque Kubbat as-Sakhra, the Dome of the Rock, was inaccessible to pilgrims). Subsequently, we proceed with two journeys outside of Jerusalem. First – to Samaria, to the place of the Meeting of Christ and the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's well (the middle scene), located on the road to Galilee, in the direction of Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum and the Sea of Galilee; it was a journey only for the determined, undertaken far more rarely as it was outside of the typical pilgrimage route; but the well of Jacob was closer to Jerusalem, and could be included in the journey to the banks of the Jordan river. Another excursion outside Jerusalem led to the Jordan river, to the site of Christ's baptism, which was included in the standard pilgrimage itinerary. On the road the pilgrims had to also visit, amongst other sites, the Mount of Temptation, and this stage is depicted in the scene of

507 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*

508 See for instance the routes of mental pilgrimages in the manuscript MS.982, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Darmstadt, in: K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, Appendix I, pp. 275–301.

the Temptations of Christ. Finally, on the right wing we return to Jerusalem in the scenes of the Triumphal Entry of Christ to Jerusalem, and Christ Cleansing the Temple, thus returning to the beginning of the Passion.

It is important to highlight that the altarpiece does not include all the important stages of a typical pilgrimage to the Holy Land, nor does it faithfully depict the real topography of Jerusalem (shown in various places), although it maintains the division of the pilgrimage into stages and the main regions. Clearly, the author followed not the realism of the physical topography, but its general impression, subordinate to the chronology of the narrative. But the selection and arrangement of the scenes correspond with the contemporary imagination of the historic and biblical Holy Land, nourished by contemporary pilgrimage guides and the descriptions of holy sites in Palestine.

The goal of the altarpiece was not a direct illustration. What was important was the general context of the site, which linked the painting with the function of the chapel. The Jerusalem Chapel, which belonged to the brotherhood of priests, played a similar role to other chapels of this kind (see chapter VI.6). They either formed an imaginative reconstruction of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre (at the same time the sanctuary of the Crucifixion at Golgotha and of the Resurrection), or its symbolic recollection (a monumental “pilgrimage souvenir”). This was the function of Jeruzalemkerk, built in Bruges by the Adornes family c. 1435–1483, The Jerusalem Chapel of the church of St. John in Gouda (c. 1497–1504), commissioned to commemorate the pilgrimage of Gijsbrecht Raet, vicar of the Church, to the Holy Land between 1478 and 1487, probably dates to c. 1485, whereas the destroyed chapel of the Holy Sepulchre of the Augustinian monastery in Edington, England (Wiltshire), commissioned by William Wey, celebrated his pilgrimages to Jerusalem in 1458 and 1462 [figs. 562, 586, 587].

Undoubtedly, the triptych in Gdańsk was not a precise cartographical or topographical tool – a reflection of an actual pilgrimage to a distant site. By depicting the Holy Land filled with the narrative of holy events from the life of Christ and of the Virgin, it stimulated pious meditation and prayer, which according to numerous literary sources on “spiritual pilgrimages,”⁵⁰⁹ acted as a substitute for painstaking and costly pilgrimage, granting access to indulgences reserved for specific locations (*loca sacra*) in Jerusalem and Palestine (for further information on this, see chapter VI.3).⁵¹⁰ Just like handbooks on mental pilgrimages, the altarpiece could act as an auxiliary tool.

509 See note 530.

510 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*

The *Jerusalem Triptych* as the topographical vision of the Holy Land, spread between Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Mount of Temptation and the Jordan, finds its ideological analogy – but only ideological, not formal or compositional – in late fifteenth-century Panorama paintings of the Holy Land, showing the Passion of Christ or the life of the Virgin [figs. 597–604]. These include: *The Passion from Turin*, the *Seven Joys of the Virgin* by Hans Memling (Turin, Galleria Sabauda and Munich, Alte Pinakothek) and other anonymous Passion panels (Lisbon, Museu Nacional do Azulejo; Pont-Saint-Éspirit, Musée d'Art Sacré du Gard; Leuven, M-Museum; Toruń, St. James Church), and in manuscript illuminations, woodcuts and tapestries (I discuss these in detail in chapter VI.8). The triptych from Gdańsk might have played the same role as these objects, acting as a mnemonic device that facilitated an embarkation on a mental pilgrimage.

The narrative assists in that goal – it is segmented, simultaneous and chronologically “atomized.” The space, also fragmented, becomes a link with its consistent, continuous and integrated arrangement. The fragmented sequence of episodes reflects the way in which the devotee’s imagination was to explore the pilgrimage routes in Jerusalem, the roads of Bethlehem, Nazareth and the banks of the Jordan. It is a holy space, in which sacred topography is integrated with fragments of time; the historic episodes spread in a continuum. As in the concept of time proposed by Nicholas of Cusa, the horizontal axis of earthly events merges with the vertical axis of sacred time, which connects the faithful-viewer with Christ-God and His theophany of evangelic events: a virtual participation in saintly events and saintly places through meditation and prayer. The key, for Cusanus, the metaphor of man as a pilgrim, discovers a space for its fulfilment. The “here and now” space of the viewer is transformed in her/his mind into a perfect place dedicated to the fulfilment of the time of the Incarnation, the time of Christ, who mediates between God and the world, God and man, and thus between eternity and temporality. The time and the space which through contemplation lead the soul towards salvation, to the *visio Dei*: communion with God in the eternal transcendent, and thus to eternity and otherworldliness, are traversed without roads, movement, change or physical action.

VI. MEDITATIVE SPACES: GREAT AND SMALL PILGRIMAGES

VI.1. Travel – journey – pilgrimage

It is actually surprising that at a time of booming international trade, when merchant routes and road networks multiplied, and international banking corporations grew, art lacked a more distinctive iconography of travel and travellers.



Fig. 556: The Housebook Master (Hausbuchmeister), *Wanderers*, c. 1470–1475, engraving and drypoint, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet



Fig. 557: Martin Schongauer, *Peasants on a Road*, 1473–1475, engraving, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 1941 (41.1.8)



Fig. 558: Albrecht Dürer, *Flight into Egypt*, engraving from the *Life of the Virgin*, 1503–1504, Vienna, Albertina

The art and literature of the late Middle Ages of course knew and frequently used the motif of a traveller, or the metaphor of life as a journey or a pilgrimage.⁵¹¹ However, it is rarely a standard, typical journey – a merchant venture or the expedition of an explorer-traveller. The horse riders on the road, shown in illuminated manuscripts in calendar cycles or in prints, are generally not travellers, but a merry courtly hunting party. Depicted in prints by the Housebook Master or by Martin Schongauer, men on roads are picturesque, poor peasants, portrayed light-heartedly (*in modo comico*), and not tradesmen or wealthy merchants [figs. 556–557]. St. George and St. Christopher appear in paintings, prints and miniatures not as the patron saints of ravelers and merchants, but as knightly figures; St. Christopher also features as the patron of a good and expected death. The scenes of the Rest of the Holy Family on the road to Egypt and of the Flight into Egypt, which gain significant popularity in the second half of the fifteenth and in the early sixteenth century (see, for instance, the work of Gerard David, Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer and others) [fig. 558], are not in fact actual visual metaphors of travel. The backgrounds of Netherlandish and German portraits of merchants, bankers, patricians and burghers often include a road with a single figure or groups of travellers, but these are always marginal motifs; they cannot be understood as allegories of travelling in reference to the state or status of the portrayed. At times, it actually seems that the goal is to juxtapose the sitter – a static figure with a stable life and an established social status – with these disdained “free folks,” *Strassen-* and *Landläufer*, *Wandervögel*, as depicted by Jheronimus Bosch in the images of the *Traveller* on the verso of two of his triptychs, entitled the *Marriage Feast at Cana* and the *Haywain* (Rotterdam, Museum Boymans Van Beuningen; Madrid, Prado) [fig. 559], who perhaps adopted here the motif of the Prodigal Son’s journey. Simon Marmion depicted travelling men on the back of a donor portrait from Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection), which shows a proud canon or an elite clergyman, surely not a merchant or a banker.

511 Ch.S. Wood, *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape*, chapter *Wanderer, traveller*, pp. 192–202; S. Kaden, “‘ende neder werpen die afgode dat is de dominacÿe der sondē in onse herten’. Schongauers Bauernfamilie auf dem Weg zum Markt als Frömmigkeitsübung,” in: *BilderGewalt*, ed. by B.U. Münch, A. Tacke, M. Herzog, S. Heudecker, Petersberg 2018, pp. 55–71. For the motif of a traveller in contemporary poetry see: J. Heim, *Das Landschaftsgefühl des augehenden Mittelalters*, Leipzig–Berlin 1934, p. 66. On real travels: N. Ohler, *Reisen im Mittelalter*, Munich 1986.



Fig. 559: Jheronimus Bosch, *Traveller* from the lost *Triptich of the Wedding at Cana*, Rotterdam, Museum Boymans Van Beuningen

The journey as such is not even present in illustrations of geographic literature, a literary genre unusually developed towards the end of the century. In atlases, similar to *Weltchronik* by Hartmann Schedel from 1493, there are no figures of travellers, only descriptive panoramas of cities and places; the subject matter of these books was not journeying but topography. Similarly, journeys are absent from the landscape and topographical studies that were common at the turn of the century, executed by artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Wolf Huber and other German masters, especially those of the so-called Danube school.

The world of distant journeys beyond Europe – the vast and foreign world⁵¹² – was described and illustrated in popular travellers' literature, in *merveilles du monde* and on maps (of a type of *mappamondo* and others). They describe a fascinating, fantastic and imaginative territory, which belongs to the imagination and has nothing to do with the reality of typical journeys across Europe, which for many constituted a lifestyle and were circumscribed by professional obligation.

Therefore, the journey as it exists in medieval art is not a form of business travel, following trade routes, but is instead primarily a pilgrimage. The journey to seek penance inspired various types and forms of late medieval art.

512 K. Zalewska, "Świat rozległy i obcy. O średniowiecznych wyobrażeniach krain egzotycznych," *Rocznik Historii Sztuki* XXIII, 1997, pp. 57–90.

VI.2. Pilgrimages

The simulation of real pilgrimages had a fundamental and lasting place in fifteenth-century art. It consisted primarily of pilgrims' souvenirs, such as replicas of holy images or relics and works commissioned to commemorate pilgrimages: images of Christ as the Man of Sorrows, based on the icon from the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome [figs. 360–361]; images of the Holy Face, the *Veraikon* from the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome [fig. 560]; and the Mandylion from the church of San Bartolomeo degli Armeni in Genoa; the painted and sculpted heads of John the Baptist, which imitated the relics from Amiens Cathedral and from the church of San Silvestro in Capite in Rome [figs. 561]; Madonnas painted by St. Luke according to various miraculous prototypes, such as the icon from Cambrai Cathedral.⁵¹³ These replicas of holy images and remains, copied into paintings or into 'souvenirs,' sustained the memory of the pilgrimage, extending it into the everyday religious life of the penitent. The physical pilgrimage was given a virtual continuity: thanks to the souvenirs and images, one could go back via memory to the place of pilgrimage and to experiences that occurred within proximity of the sacred object being venerated. One could spiritually return to the pilgrimage once undertaken.



Fig. 560: Monogrammist L.Cz., *Veraikon*, displayed by Sts. Peter and Paul, to celebrate the relics at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, engraving, 1497

513 M.W. Ainsworth, "‘A la façon grèce’: The Encounter of Northern Renaissance Artists with Byzantine Icons," in: *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. by H.C. Evans, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York–Yale



Fig. 561: Aelbert Bouts or his workshop, *Head of St. John the Baptist on a Platter* – “replica” of the relics from the Cathedral in Amiens, Warsaw, National Museum



Fig. 562: Jeruzalemkerk in Bruges, 1427 (1435) – 1483

Following the journey to the Holy Land, which he undertook with his brother Jacob, Pieter Adornes, a patrician from Bruges, commissioned the building of the Jerusalem Church (*Jeruzalemkerk*) in his home city in 1427 or 1435 [fig. 562], based on the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. He wished to commemorate his pilgrimage and establish a tangible mark of his pious endeavour for his compatriots.⁵¹⁴ The building of the church was completed by his son, Anselm Adornes – an important figure in Bruges, the Netherlands and the Duchy of Burgundy. As a re-elected member of the city council of Bruges and Brugse Vrije (Franc-de-Bruges), he was treasurer and mayor in 1475, and chancellor for both the Burgundian Duke Charles the Bold and the Scottish King James III. He held title of *seigneur de Gentbrugge, Jerusalem et Ste. Catherine du Mont Sinai* – Lord of Bruges and Ghent, Lord of Jerusalem and of Mount Sinai – and it was these references to the Holy Places in the Levant that most strongly defined his status and prestige. He was a knight of various orders including the Order of the Holy Sepulchre; his ties with the Levant were also manifested by his title of the knight of the Order of the Persian Shah. Adornes undertook pilgrimages to the Holy Land at least twice, including in 1470 with his son John. Undoubtedly, he wished to see the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, a model for his commission in Bruges. Therefore, the edifice linked the actual penitent journey of the patrons with the virtual, commemorative pilgrimage.

VI.3. Real and virtual pilgrimages

For Late Medieval people, a pilgrimage was a very real action, a challenging undertaking and an important life experience.

There were three main pilgrimages – *peregrinationes maiores* – to the Holy Land and Jerusalem, to Rome and to Santiago de Compostela.⁵¹⁵ The first two were frequently combined into a single, great adventure that lasted

University Press, New Haven 2004, pp. 544–555; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, chapter IX.4; T.-H. Borchert et al., *Path to Europe: from Byzantium to the Low Countries*, exh. cat., BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels 2017.

514 A. Vandewalle, *Adornes en Jeruzalem. Internationaal leven in in het 15de en 16de-eeuwse Brugge*, exh. cat., Jeruzalemkapel, Brugge 1983; J. Pennick, *De Jeruzalemkerk te Brugge*, Bruges 1986, especially pp. 4–7 and 10–11. Cf. note 548.

515 J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Medieval Religion*, New Jersey 1975; V. Turner, E.L.B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, New York, 1978; W. Schneider, *Peregrinatio Hierosolymitana. Studien zum spätmittelalterlichen Jerusalembrauch und zu den aus der Heiliglandfahrt hervorgegangenen nordwesteuropäischen Jerusalembruderschaften*, Münster 1982;

between eight and ten months. Travellers from England and the Netherlands sometimes embarked on pilgrimage to the relics of the Three Magi in Cologne. The standard route included stop-offs at sanctuaries in Bologna (on the road to Rome) and in Venice (on the road to the Holy Land, or as an addition to the pilgrimage to Rome). This pilgrimage became incredibly popular, and between 1300 and 1500 there were at least one million pilgrims.

Long-distance pilgrimages in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries became primarily a devotional act (initially most were penitential), a way of enacting and manifesting individual piety. They were not undertaken to seek grace, or to offer thanks to God, or to experience a miracle, such as encountering bleeding hosts or miracle-working images and statues. These needs were satisfied by pilgrimages to local shrines, short-distance journeys to various *loca sacra*, national or regional sanctuaries. Great pilgrimages nourished the faith, allowing the spiritual and actual following in the steps of Christ and the Apostles in the Holy Land, or of St. Peter and Paul, the martyrs and saints, to experience their relics and those of Christ and the Virgin in Rome, the traces of St. James in Compostela. But this was not all. Their main goal was to obtain the indulgences, either plenary (full) or partial, that were assigned to a specific holy place. This was also the purpose

J. van Herwaarden, "Geloof en geloofsuitingen in de late middeleeuwen in de Nederlanden. Jerusalembedevoarten, lijdensdevotie en kruiswegverering," *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 98, 1983, pp. 400–429; N. Ran (ed.), *Journeys to the Promised Land: Maps, Diaries and Journals of Travellers to Israel in Ancient Days and Present*, London 1989; U. Ganz-Blättler, *Andacht und Abenteuer. Berichte europäischer Jerusalem- und Santiago-Pilger (1320–1520)*, Tübingen 1990; *Kurs Jerusalem. Karten und Dokumente zur Pilgerfahrt ins Heilige Land*, exh. cat., Diözesanbibliothek, Cologne 1990; L. K. Davidson, M. Dunn-Wood, *Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. A Research-Guide*, New York – London 1993; N. Ohler, *Pilgerleben im Mittelalter. Zwischen Andacht und Abenteuer*, Freiburg i.Br. 1994; F. Vanhemelryck, *Kruis en wassende maan. Pelgrimstochten naar het Heilig Land*, Leuven 1994; D.J. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change*, Woolbridge 1998; D. Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West*, London 1999; N. Ohler, *Pilgerstab und Jakobsmuschel. Wallfahrten in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, Düsseldorf 2000; L.A. Craig, "Stronger than men and braver than knights': Women and the pilgrimages to Jerusalem and Rome in the later Middle Ages," *Journal of Medieval History* 29, 2003, no. 3, pp. 153–175; H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela. Wielkie pielgrzymki u schyłku średniowiecza*, Wrocław 2008; *Visual constructs of Jerusalem*, ed. by B. Kühnel, G. Noga-Banai, H. Vorholt, Turnhout 2014; J. Harpur, *The Pilgrim Journey: A History of Pilgrimage in the Western World*, Oxford 2016; *Pilgrimage and the Senses*, conference University of Oxford, 7 June 2019 (publication in progress).

of pilgrimages to local shrines, *peregrinationes minores*. These indulgences could be accumulated in order to receive full pardon of one's sins and remission of temporal punishment. This approach has led to what scholars have termed a "calculatory devotion," although it did not negate the spiritual meaning of the pilgrimage. However, the use of indulgences were widely criticised by the spiritual restorers, theologians and the members of the Windesheim movement, and then later by the Reformers and Renaissance humanists. The belief that collected indulgences allowed not only the remission of punishment, but also the sin itself, became widespread. This devotion was supported by the collecting of holy souvenirs – devotional and tourist objects, and, more rarely, actual relics – brought from pilgrimages. The great pilgrimages allowed pilgrims to discover the world, with its distant and unfamiliar lands – they satisfied people's curiosity and need of the exotic. This was something that the regional pilgrimages did not offer, but they helped to nourish a curiosity of a different kind – a fascination with miraculous. The local, regional and interregional pilgrims' destinations in Northern Europe, such as Aachen with the Virgin's dress, Cologne with the relics of the Three Magi, Wilsnack and other sanctuaries with bleeding hosts, Amiens with the head of St. John the Baptist or Wrocław with other remains of this same saint and also the arm of St. Stanislaus, developed important rituals *ostensio reliquiarum*, that were combined with the granting of indulgences. The emphasis shifted from penance, pleading and being thankful, to focusing on spectacle and the gaining of indulgences. During the "Feast of the Holiness" the collection of relics accumulated by Emperor Charles IV was displayed at Wenceslas Square in Prague. In Vienna from 1483 (or 1485) relics could be seen in the arcades of the building by the Cathedral, the tribune for displaying the holy remains, the *Heiltumstubl*. The churches housed famous relics such as those of the Crown of Thorns and the Passion of Christ in the Parisian Sainte-Chapelle or of the Holy Blood in the Heilig-Bloed-Kapelle in Bruges Brugii. Alternatively, churches accumulated great numbers of relics, as in the Wettin Chapel in Wittenberg (18,970 saintly remains, which theoretically allowed the pilgrims to obtain over nine hundred thousand years of pardon of sins and time in Purgatory in a single year). Another such example was the Church of St. Maurice in Halle, which held over eight hundred fragments: these were believed to ensure the remission of sins for over thirty nine million years! Masses of pilgrims were drawn to these sanctuaries. In 1475, the city gates in Frankfurt had to be closed because of the numbers of pilgrims travelling to obtain the forty-day indulgence of the holy hosts in Wilsnack, which shed drops of the "actual" blood of Christ.

However, the troubles involved in journeying to distant lands motivated the development of virtual pilgrimages. It was possible to go on the holy

pilgrimage *per procura* by sending a substitute, as done by the Burgundian Duke, Philip the Good, who in 1426 sent Jan van Eyck to an unidentified holy place, perhaps even the Holy Land. The diplomatic mission sent by the Duke of Portugal in 1428–1429 to Santiago da Compostela was probably also a pilgrimage *per procura*. The French Queen, Isabelle of Bavaria sent envoys to visit, in her place, the relics accumulated in various shrines across her own country.⁵¹⁶ King Louis XI on numerous occasions sent his delegates to embark on pilgrimages in his place.⁵¹⁷ At Walsingham, England (Norfolk), the site of the replica of the house of Christ and the Virgin from Nazareth, which also held a miraculous figure of the Virgin and various relics from Christ's childhood (such as ampullae containing the Virgin's milk), there was a special category of donations made by such envoys.⁵¹⁸

However, it was not a common tradition. In general, distant pilgrimages were undertaken personally, at great expense, with the pilgrims suffering discomforts and risking illnesses or even death.

VI.4. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land

Among the great pilgrimages the one to the Holy Land occupied a special position, and was reflected most widely in art and literature. It was special, because the Holy Land was one, vast material relic: with its holy buildings, shrines, stones, ground and sand on which Christ, the Virgin and the Apostles had walked. It brought together pilgrims with all potential motives for their journey. As described by Halina Manikowska:

It was the reflection of the need for a mystical meeting with Christ and his Mother on the road that followed their steps, the *imitatio Christi* through encountering the places where their footprints had fallen; through the doloristic cult of the Passion and the cult of Christ's Childhood that flourished in the fourteenth century; through the cult of the Virgin, with its relentless collecting of relics and indulgences; the internal calling to do penance; naive faith in miracles, nourished by a simple curiosity to see the 'familiar' that had been encouraged by mystery plays, sermons and new services (the Via Crucis); a hunger for the visual confirmation of past events; the belief that the efforts of the pilgrimage will be rewarded after death, and the hope of prestige, confirmed by becoming the knight of the Holy Sepulchre; lastly, an eagerness for crusades...⁵¹⁹

516 J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Medieval Religion*, New Jersey 1975, p. 299.

517 J.J. Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, New York 1961, p. 210.

518 H.M. Gillet, *Shrines of Our Lady in England and Wales*, London 1957, p. 181.

519 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, pp. 74–75.

To this may be added, from the end of the fifteenth century, the growing curiosity of explorers to see distant lands.

The numerous pilgrimage accounts describe these varied motives. According to Ursula Ganz-Blättler (1990), from c. 1320 to 1540 two hundred and sixty two descriptions of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem survive, sometimes combined with accounts of other *peregrinationes maiores*, while from the pilgrimage to Santiago there are only thirty eight surviving written records.⁵²⁰ Ludwig Schmutge (1988) traced four hundred and forty-seven published accounts from the journey to the Holy Land (including a great number that did not come down to us).⁵²¹ Over a half of these texts date from c. 1440, and the beginning of the sixteenth century. Amongst the most substantial and interesting are descriptions by Italians such as Roberto da Sanseverino, Gabriele Capodilista, Giovanni Matteo Bottigelli (all from 1458); the English cleric and scholar William Wey (1458); Anton Pelchinger, the Benedictine professor from Tegernsee in Bavaria (1458); an account by Jean Adornes from his pilgrimage and that of his father Anselm in 1470; four descriptions by Santo Brasca, the Milanese courtier; a text by the French cleric Pierre Barbatre (1480); an illustrated account by Konrad von Grünemberg, a patrician from Constance (1486); a text by Georges Lengheerand, the mayor of Mons (Bergen in Hainaut) from 1486; an account by the Milanese friar Girolamo Castiglione (1486); a description by the German knight Arnold von Harff of a great journey in 1496–1499, and various anonymous works including one by a Netherlandish pilgrim (1458), a Parisian (1480) and a man from Rennes (1486). This genre also includes reports written down by travellers-scouts or spies, sent by rulers to investigate the situation before preparing new crusades, such as the envoys of the Burgundian Duke Philip the Good, Ghuillebert de Lannoy (his account records a journey carried out in 1421, on behalf of Henry V of England, at whose court Ghuillebert was the Burgundian ambassador, described in *Les Pelerinages de Surye et de Egipte*), and Bertrandon de la Broquière (who recorded a journey to the Holy Land, Sinai and Constantinople in 1432–1433, described in *Le Voyage d'Outremer*) [fig. 563]). The highly detailed accounts of two Southern German pilgrims, namely Felix Fabri and Bernhard von Breydenbach, are well known. Felix Schmidt (called Fabri), a Dominican friar from Ulm, went to the Holy Land twice, in 1480 and 1483 (the second trip included a pilgrimage to the Monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai, and to Egypt), and

520 U. Ganz-Blättler, *Andacht und Abendteuer...*, p. 40, the catalogue of the printed editions of the accounts: p. 355 ff.

521 L. Schmutge, "Kollektive und individuelle Motivstrukturen im mittelalterlichen Pilgerwesen," in: *Migration in der Feudalgesellschaft*, ed. G. Jaritz, A. Müller, Frankfurt a.M. – New York 1988, p. 281.

described his experiences in 1492, together with the description of a journey to Rome and Compostela, in *Evagatorium in Terræ Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem*. Bernhard von Breydenbach, a learned canon from Mainz, undertook the pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1483–1484 to accompany Count Johann zu Solms, and in 1486 his work was printed by Erhard Reuwich in Mainz as *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (published also in a German version). It was richly illustrated, with maps and coloured woodcuts by Reuwich, and scientifically edited by Martin Roth, a Dominican professor of the University of Mainz, who added quotes and biblical, theological and literary references to the original texts [fig. 564].⁵²²

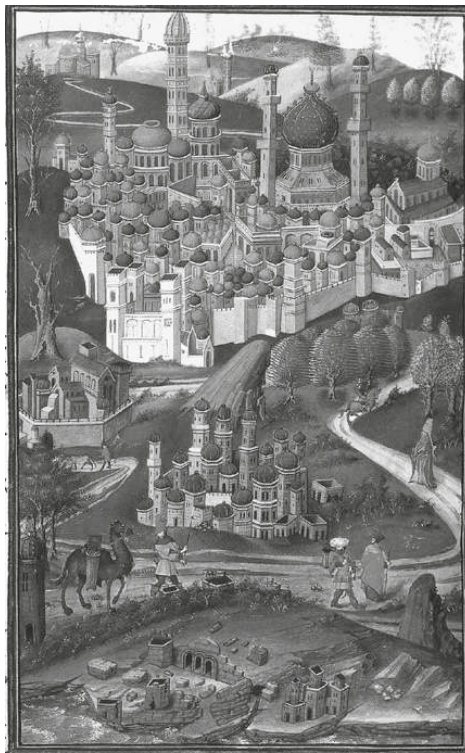


Fig. 563: Jean Le Tavernier, *Jerusalem and its Surroundings*, illumination from *Avis pour faire Le passage d'Outre-Mer, Description de la Terre Sainte and Voyage en la terre d'Outremer*, after 1455, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. fr. 9087, fol. 85v

⁵²² *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* by Bernhard von Breydenbach: A. Klußmann, *Bernhard von Breydenbach: Peregrinatio in terram sanctam. Erste deutsche Ausgabe von Peter Schöffner, Mainz 1486*, facsimile edition with commentary Saarbrücken 2008; I. Mozer, *Bernhard von Breydenbach: Peregrinatio in*



Fig. 564: Erhard Reuwich, *Large Panorama of the Holy Land and Jerusalem*, in: Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam*, Mainz 1486, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.49.3)

The descriptions of the Holy Land, diaries from pilgrimages, and itineraries (guides) of pilgrims form a large section of late medieval travellers' literature. They have a long tradition that goes back to the beginning of the penitential movement in the fourth century, developed in historic writing, chronicles and reports from the crusades (for instance the *Historia Hierosolymitana* by William of Tyre, 1169–1184), as well as in medieval encyclopedias.⁵²³ New texts from the fifteenth century addressed new themes: information about trade and sailing, legends from the lives of saints from the *Golden Legend*, stories from chivalric romances and novels, intertwined with geographic and topographic discourses based on observations from real life. "The description of the Holy Land (writes Halina Manikowska), abundantly inspired by epics, chronicles, apocrypha and eastern miracle accounts, gave ground to pilgrimage memoirs, full of first-hand insights useful for travellers, drawn from competent informers on ships and in Palestine, from pilgrims' guidebooks and from personal experience. The authors of pilgrims' diaries had to determine three things about the visited cities and towns: their geographic location, the names of their

terram sanctam. Eine Pilgerreise ins Heilige Land; frühneuhochdeutscher Text und Übersetzung, edition with commentary, Berlin 2010. See also: *Die Reise nach Jerusalem – Bernhard von Breydenbachs Wallfahrt ins Heilige Land*, exh. cat., Gutenberg-Museum, Mainz 1992; F. Timm, *Der Palästina-Bericht des Bernhard von Breidenbach und die Holzschnitte Erhard Reuwichs. Die Peregrinatio in terram sanctam (1486) als Propagandabericht im Mantel der gelehrten Pilgerschrift*, Stuttgart 2006; E. Ross, *Picturing Experience in the Early Printed Book: Breydenbach's Peregrinatio from Venice to Jerusalem*, University Park, Pennsylvania, 2014; K. Beebe, "The Jerusalem of the mind's eye: Imagined pilgrimage in the late fifteenth century," in: *Visual constructs of Jerusalem...*, pp. 409–420; M.E. Dorninger, "Memory and representations of Jerusalem in medieval and early modern pilgrimage reports," in: *Visual constructs of Jerusalem*, 421–428; B. Bakker, "Bernhard von Breydenbach and Erhard Reuwich of Utrecht: Pioneers in the theory and practice of the lifelike printed image," *Simiolus* 40, 2018, no. 4, pp. 231–257.

523 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, pp. 36–38.

holy sites, and who [...] ruled over the territory in question.”⁵²⁴ They also detailed the indulgences assigned to specific shrines and holy locations. The authors of these accounts came to Palestine with a clear view of the Biblical events and scenery, conditioned by the ‘familiar’ from their milieu of paintings, sculptures, miniatures, mystery plays, and literary texts: the Passion histories, the apocryphal stories and legends of the saints, and the narratives related to the relics that had been moved to Europe earlier. Their writings were informed by earlier descriptions and stories from the Holy Land, by diaries and above all by the standard set of narratives of the Franciscans, who controlled the pilgrims’ routes in Jerusalem and Palestine.

Apart from pilgrims’ diaries and memoirs from the journeys, framed as guidebooks to the Holy Land, the literary sources included short books – *libelli* – with a simple list of holy places and indulgences, and brief encyclopedic descriptions of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. They served the needs of the penitents and were edited by the Jerusalem Franciscans from Mont Sion, who had resided there from 1333 to fulfil their role as the organizers of the pilgrims’ movement. The Franciscans had three other convents in Jerusalem: near the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, by the Tomb of the Virgin Mary in the Josaphat Valley, and in the Grotto of Agony at the foot of the Mount of Olives, as well as outside Jerusalem in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

The accounts of pilgrimages and itineraries did not merely form a written record of a devotional act, they were also guidebooks for successors, often dedicated to members of the family, business partners, principals, confreres and other relatives. They served not only as an aid for future pilgrimages, but also as the foundation of a meditative, spiritual pilgrimage that took place in the mind and imagination of the reader. The published guidebook by Breydenbach, which was richly illustrated and written in ekphrastic language, must have played these two roles. It was printed in twenty-seven editions between 1486 and 1522, including three Latin, four German, four Netherlandish, two French and one Spanish edition. Its large format, *in folio*, excluded the function of a handbook that could be taken on a journey; undoubtedly the book was intended to be read at home, as a preparation for the virtual-spiritual pilgrimage. The books in the type of descriptions from the journey, such as those by Santa Brasca, Fabri, Breydenbach or Arnold von Harff, played a mnemonic role: they facilitated the memorization of the holy site, or the imagining of the unseen world of shrines, and allowed readers to reconstruct more or less accurately the topography of the Holy Land, Jerusalem and other places. Their content followed contemporary mnemonic technics: to arrange in a specific order the things to be remembered, to respond emotionally to them, to experience their meaning,

524 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, p. 39.

to associate them with analogous, highly memorable things; to return to them, repeating the material in meditation and recollection.⁵²⁵ To this purpose served not only the arrangement and the content of the text, but also additional devices, used during the journey and beyond. William Wey, travelling to the Holy Land in 1458 and 1462 (and to Santiago in 1456), added a map of Palestine and the Syrian Lands to his written account in Latin and English (preserved in a manuscript version at the Bodleian Library, Ms. 565, only published in the nineteenth century). The Wey manuscript included a list of holy places, sanctuaries, pilgrimage destinations, tables of distances, and mnemotechnic verses, which helped readers to remember foreign names, as well as dictionaries of Greek and Hebrew terms.⁵²⁶

At times the illuminated illustrations in new editions of old travellers and pilgrims' books fulfilled a similar instructive and mnemotechnic role. In 1455, Philip the Good, the Duke of Burgundy, ordered Jean Mielot, Canon of Lille and his courtly writer, to translate into French the bestseller of medieval travellers' literature *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* (c. 1283–1284) by Burchard of Mount Sion, a German Dominican friar who sojourned in the Holy Land between 1274 and 1284. The miniature showing Jerusalem [fig. 563] reveals many topographical realities, juxtaposed in a synthetic and abbreviated form. The specific places are easily identifiable: in the bottom left hand corner the big tower of Athlit castle at the side of the road, the pilgrimage fortress abandoned by the Templars in 1291. The neighbouring, ruined port city is the old fortress of crusaders and a city in Jaffa, ruined in the fourteenth century; further on, the city with minarets on the road to Jerusalem is Ramlah; next on the left is Bethlehem with the Church of the Nativity; Jerusalem is seen from the West. In its outline, it is characterised by the Mosque of Kubbat as-Sakhra (the Dome of the Rock) with its blue dome, and on the right hand side the Mosque of Al-Aksa, depicted as a church; on the left there is the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre with its characteristic, open dome, thanks to its oculus; in front of it there is the Citadel (Tower) of David with its four cornered towers. In the background, beyond the city walls, is the zigzagging road leading to the Mount of Olives, and to the Basilica of the Ascension. The arrangement of these important places corresponds largely with the main road of the pilgrimage.

The following is described in the pilgrims' accounts and itineraries.⁵²⁷ After their ships arrived at the port in Jaffa, the pilgrims stayed in the cells

525 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, p. 51.

526 F. Davey, "William Wey: An English pilgrim's journey to Jerusalem," in: *Pilgrimage: the sacred journey*, ed. by R. Barnes, Oxford 2006, pp. 80–95; P. Arad, "Pilgrimage, cartography, and devotion: William Wey's map of the Holy Land," *Viator* 43, 2012, no. 1, pp. 301–322; M. Boyle, "William Wey's Itinerary to the Holy Land: Bodleian Library, MS. Bodl. 565 (c.1470)," *Bodleian Library Record* 28, 2015, pp. 22–36.

527 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, passim.

of the Cellaria Sancti Petri in the town's ruins. Subsequently, they went to Ramlah, where they stayed in a hospital commissioned by Philip the Good. From there, guided by the Jerusalem Franciscans, they reached the Holy City. There the laymen lived in various quarters, most commonly in the Hospital near the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, and the clergymen in the Franciscan convent on Sion. The sojourn in the Holy Land typically lasted between 8 and 13 days. The standard itinerary, apart from the holy places in Jerusalem, included Christ's birthplace – Bethlehem – and the place of His baptism in Jordan.

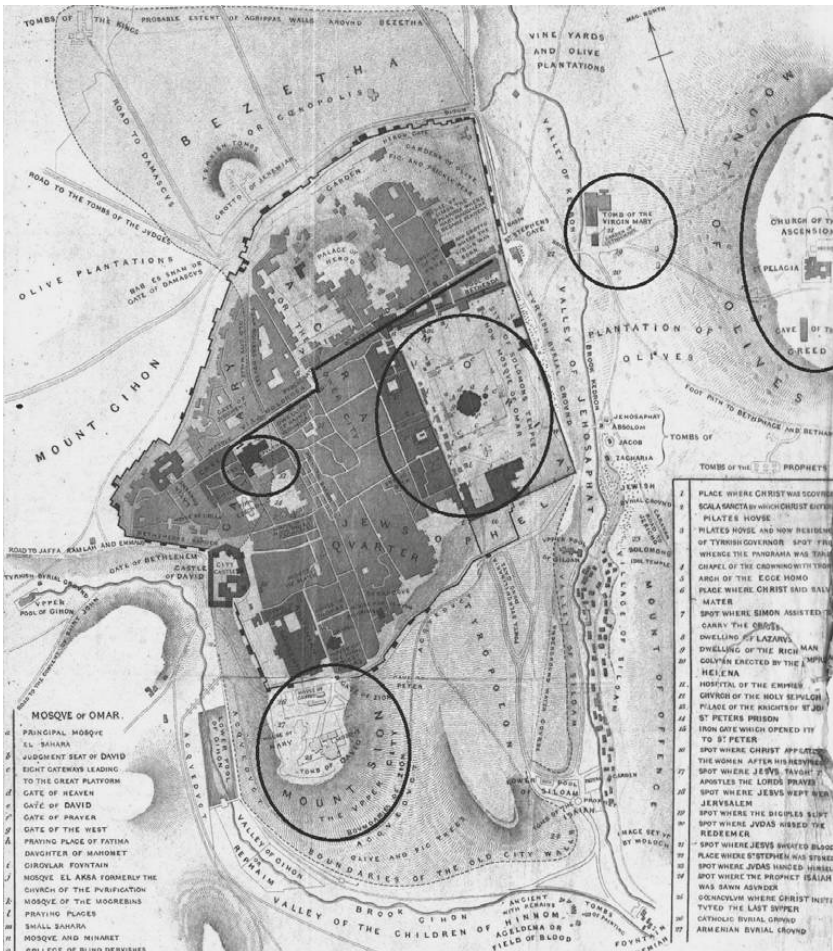


Fig. 565: Map of Jerusalem and its pilgrimage sites, Frederick Catherwood, 1935, Washington, Library of Congress, G7504.J4 1835.C3– with the main hills and devotional districts indicated, and the Holy Route of the Via Crucis

The *Sanctus circuitus* of Jerusalem – the tour of its most holy places– commenced on the first day from the Cenacle, in the building of the Franciscan convent on Sion [see fig. 565]. In the upper chapel, pilgrims contemplated the place of the Last Supper and in the lower the washing of the apostles' feet. The Tomb of David, in the same building, was not accessible to the Christians at that time; and only its location was pointed out to pilgrims. Next to the sanctuary, a small chapel was built above a hole in the ground where the Crown of Thorns was found. On Mount Sion the pilgrims also visited the place where the Risen Christ appeared to the Three Marys, the apostles and to doubting Thomas. There was also a rock on which the Virgin sat, and from which Christ preached. The tour included the site of the Virgin's death, of masses conducted for her by St. John, and the location from which her body was taken to the grotto in the Josephat Valley. On Sion the pilgrims also visited the place of the calling of St. Matthias, the burial site of St. Stephen and of the beheading of St. James the Elder. Many of these places had structures erected around them, forming a network of sanctuaries, frequently linked by a specific cult. The Cenacle was related to the cult of the Dormition of the Virgin, because of the neighbouring house of her guardian, St. John the Evangelist, in which she was said to have died.

The next stage of the pilgrimage, from the Cenacle to the Valley of Kidron, led through the House of Caiaphas and the House of Annas. There they contemplated the arrest of Christ, His trial before the Sanhedrin, and the denial of St. Peter. Over the House of Caiaphas was the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu (from Peter's triple denial of Christ at the cock's-crow); 500 meters from the Cenacle was the Nea Church, the New St. Mary Church, a place that commemorated the Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple. At times this place was associated or confused with the episode of the Presentation of Christ. Some authors – following the Biblical account – placed both events in Solomon's Temple, either believed to be destroyed without trace or identified with the building replaced by the Dome of the Rock. Others, such as Breydenbach, believed that the Presentation of Christ occurred not in Solomon's Temple (believed to be the Dome of the Rock) but in the building that once stood at the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque. In the Late Middle Ages, the Presentation of Christ at the Temple and the meeting with Simeon formed a part of the Marian cult that celebrated feasts such as the Purification of the Virgin Mary. In the fifteenth century, there was a ruined hospital and church of the Teutonic order near the Nea Church, which was also dedicated to the Virgin.

Subsequently, the pilgrims descended from Mount Sion towards the Kidron Valley, which was identified with the Old Testament Josephat Valley, the place of the future Last Judgment. It separates Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives and continues from the north to the south and south-west beyond the walls of Jerusalem; to the south from Mount Moriah (the hill with the two mosques of Kubbat as-Sakhra and Al-Aksa) it joins the Valley of Hinnom. From there travellers looked to the Pool of Siloam, the place where Christ cured the blind, and the Potter's Field, the piece of land bought with Judas'

thirty pieces of silver. The Valley of Hinnom was identified with Gehenna, the place of suffering for the condemned in the Jewish and Christian afterworlds.

The next day, through the bridge on the Kidron, pilgrims traversed the Josephat Valley and moved from Sion to the Mount of Olives. The route included the Garden of Gethsemane, the site of Christ's agony in the garden, after which he was betrayed by Judas and arrested. From there pilgrims climbed up the mountain top from which Christ ascended into heaven. The Church of the Apostles and the Basilica of the Saviour commemorated the first events and the latter were celebrated by the Chapel of the Ascension. The burial site of the Virgin at the edge of the Garden of Gethsemane, which included an empty tomb in its crypt, was also the place of her Assumption, with the Basilica of the Assumption. Only ruins remained of the two-storeyed church built by the Crusaders and destroyed by Saladin in 1187. The tour of the Mount of Olives included other holy places: the site where Christ taught the Pater Noster to the Apostles, and where the Credo was formulated; the place of the Virgin's rest, where after Christ's Ascension she walked on the path frequented by her Son. To this place led the road from Bethany, which was the site where Christ first sat on the donkey before entering the city. It was believed to be the site where He wept over Jerusalem, because it offered a perfect panorama of the city.

After the Mount of Olives, pilgrims returned to the city to the Houses of Pilate and Herod, then, after walking under the Ecce Homo Arch, they continued along the *Via Crucis* (*Via Dolorosa*), with all the Stations of the Cross, towards Calvary (Golgotha). The early modern and modern liturgy of the fourteen Stations of the Cross is a later development; it was codified in the seventeenth century. But its origins are clear in itineraries and pilgrims' accounts from the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries; in the early thirteenth century, Wilbrand von Oldenburg mentions the stations; in the late thirteenth century their arrangement was partially described by a Dominican friar named Ricold da Montecroce, and in the fourteenth century the road with stations is mentioned in the accounts of Jacopo da Verona, Niccolò da Poggibonsi, Wilhelm von Boldensele and in the guides to the Holy Land. It was only in around 1420 that the pilgrims' narratives (those by Stefan von Gumpfenberg, Hans Porner, Johannes Poloner, or Jan Polack of Regensburg) started to list in a specific order the Stations of the Cross as a regular and mandatory part of the pilgrimage. The route was measured in steps (between 1,050 and 1,100 steps). The names of the stations and their number varied. The stations in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre formed a separate arrangement. On the road from the House of Pilate (the Praetorium) to the Church, the fifteenth-century accounts list: the places of Christ's three falls; His meeting with His mother; the Virgin fainting; the calling of Simon of Cyrene to assist with the carrying of the cross; the lamenting women; the meeting with Veronica by her house and the

wiping of Christ's face with her veil. Some pilgrims, including Santo Brasca in 1480, followed the Via Crucis in the opposite direction: from the Golden Gate, known as the Gate of St. Stephen (where he was martyred), walking from the house of the rich man (from the parable of Lazarus and the rich man) along all the stations: the meeting with Simon of Cyrene, preaching to the lamenting women, the fainting of the Virgin (with the ruined Church of the Mother of Sorrows); Christ's trial before Pilate, visiting the school of the Virgin Mary, to the station of the House of Herod and the House of Pilate (the places of the Flagellation and the Crowning with Thorns), later visiting the place where Christ forgave Mary Magdalene's sins. Subsequently, pilgrims turned to the road that led to the Temple Mount, visiting also a side alley off the Probatika pond, where Christ heeled a paralytic.

The visit on Mount Moriah (the Temple Mount) included viewing (though only from the outside, as the area with the holy mosques was reserved for Muslims only) the place of Solomon's old Temple, frequently identified with the Kubbat as-Sakhra. It was the site of the Virgin and Christ's presentations at the Temple (if the place was not associated with the Nea Church). Here the Virgin was taught how to pray (according to the legend, from a psalter); here also the angel announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zachariah, the betrothal of the Virgin and Joseph took place, and the twelve year-old Christ preached to the Jewish doctors. According to apocrypha and legends Christ talked to Simeon in this place, saved a woman who was supposed to be stoned, and expelled the merchants from the Temple. Here, in Old Testament times, Melchizedek offered bread and wine to Abraham, anticipating the sacrament of the Eucharist. It was at this location that Abraham offered his son Isaac, and Solomon built his temple; here the Ark of the Covenant was kept. It was a site of numerous miracles, such as the one that took place during Charlemagne's pilgrimage (only legendary) when he saw an angel, who gave him Christ's foreskin. The relic was taken to France and placed in the abbey of Charroux in Poitou, in rivalry to the foreskin held at the Sancta Sanctorum Chapel of the Lateran (during the Sack of Rome in 1527, it was taken to Calcata, a town north of Rome). Behind this legend there is a story of rivalry of the holy foreskin from Rome with several other relics of this kind in the North, including Charroux, Antwerp and Coulombs near Chartres. It is important to note that both in the pilgrims' accounts (with some exceptions, such as the writings of Santo Brasca) and in the visual representations the temple was not treated in an unusually prominent way: it was an octagonal building with a dome; this lack of special attention was understandable due to its being the centre of Muslim devotion, which was inaccessible to Christian pilgrims. The ancient and early medieval tradition of identifying the Temple with the centre of the world, had shifted to Golgotha, the place of Redemption. Its role was diminished in relation to the hegemony of the Holy Sepulchre thanks to the Franciscan friars, the leaders of pilgrimages for Western Christendom, who resided next to it.

During the return from the Temple Mount to the *Via Crucis*, some pilgrims visited the church of St. Anne, with the grotto of the nativity of the Virgin, the house of Joachim, the tomb of Simeon, and of Anne and Joachim.

The remaining stations of the Road to Calvary, located next to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, formed a separate stage of the pilgrimage, which was its culminating point.

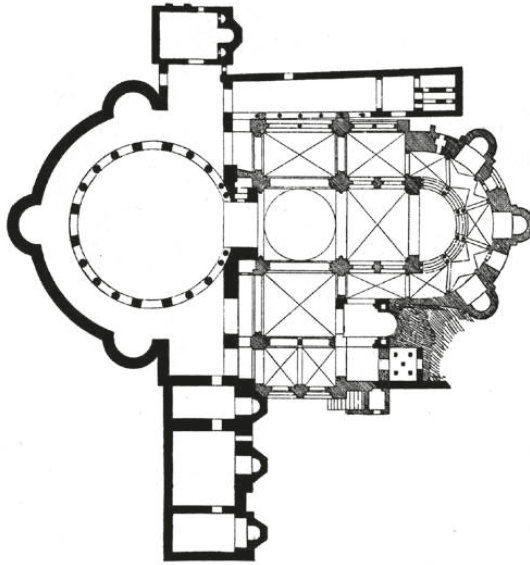


Fig. 566: Plan of the Anastasis Rotunda and Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem



Fig. 567: Major pilgrim sites in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem

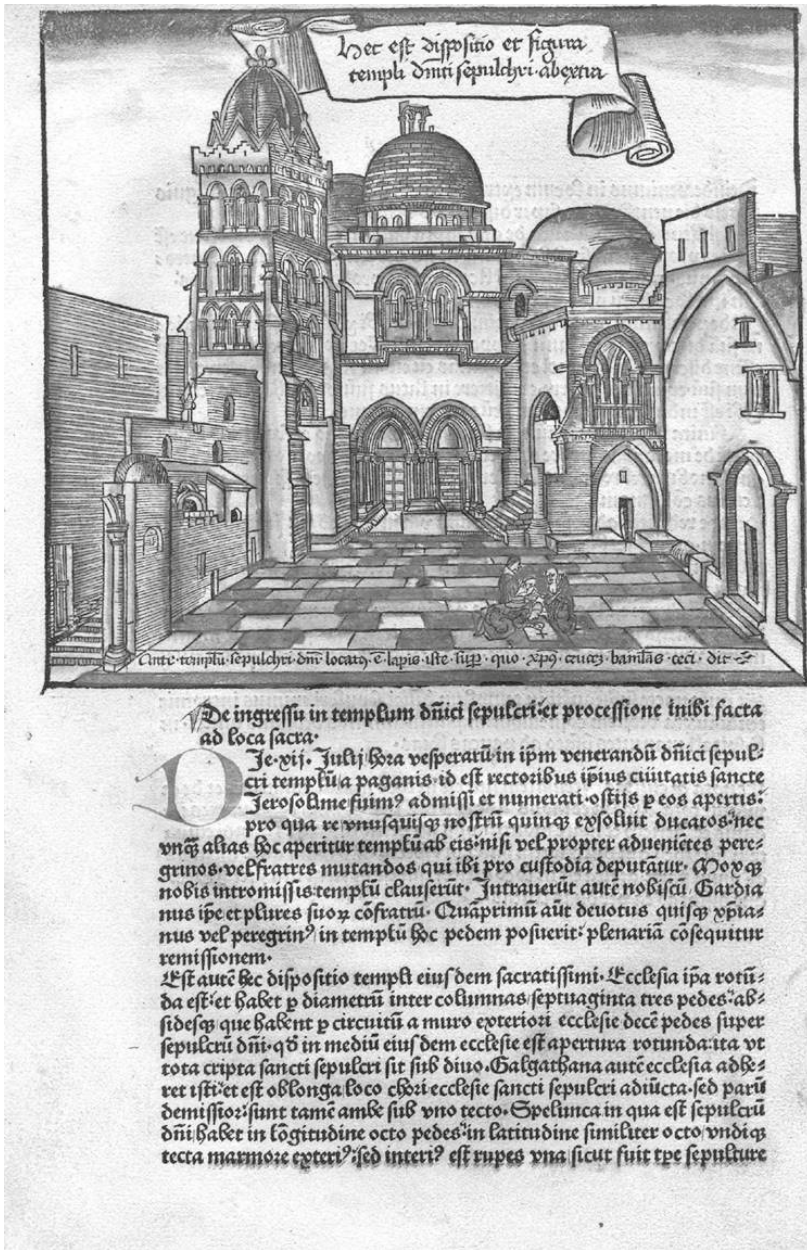


Fig. 568: Erhard Reuwich, *Entrance to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem*, woodcut, in Bernhard von Breydenbach's *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam*, Mainz 1486, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.49.3)



Fig. 569: Entrance to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem – present-day view

The Church consisted of two main parts [figs. 566–567]. In the west of the entire, monumental structure, there stood the original rotunda of the Resurrection (Anastasis), rebuilt by the crusaders into a two-storied building with an ambulatory and a dome with an oculus opened to the sky. Inside the rotunda there was a chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Further east there was the church – the new basilica, built by the crusaders after 1160. The naves were built on a half Greek cross plan, inscribed in a rectangle with a dome, under which a rock in the pavement marked the *omphalos*: the navel, the centre of the world, according to many pilgrims the site where the Risen Christ had appeared to Mary Magdalene (in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea). It was also the place of the legendary washing or anointing of the body of Christ, taken from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea. The entrance was from the south [figs. 568–569] and led the pilgrim to the true Stone of Unction, placed in the south transept of the crossing. Further, on the right-hand side, behind the main nave was the canonical choir, closed by a semicircular exedra with an ambit and chapels, which had three stations from the Passion of Christ: the Mocking, the Flagellation and Christ Stripped of His Garments. From the north the Church was connected to a building identified as Christ's prison – another station on the Road to Calvary. Adjacent to the south-east part of the church was Calvary-Golgotha, the place of the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, the Lamentation, and also of the discovery and cult of the Holy Cross. Towards the end of the Middle Ages it was a two-storeyed building, erected during the reign of the Byzantine

emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and transformed by crusaders, with the chapel of the tomb of Adam in the lower section (the burial chapel of the kings of Jerusalem); the upper floor had the chapel of the rock of Golgotha, the site of the Cross – the chapel of the Crucifixion. In the choir of the church, from the east, was the oratory of St. Helen with the chapel commemorating the finding of the relics of the True Cross.

The pilgrims typically came to the church twice and spent a day in it. They received holy communion during mass celebrated by the Franciscans from the convent to the north of the Church and the Rotunda. They took off their shoes and entered the building. Then they processed from the chapel of the Crucifixion to the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, and to the Stations of the Passion in the choir and in the buildings of Golgotha and the Rotunda: the Descent from the Cross, the Entombment, the *Noli me tangere*, and the Risen Christ with his Mother. They continued with a visit to the Chapel of St. Helena and the finding of the True Cross, located behind the Church. The circumstances were not ideal for meditation and the service of the *Via Crucis*. On the road, the Latin pilgrims interacted with Greeks, Armenians and Ethiopians, with busy clergymen representing various confessions, with the keepers of different chapels, oratories and altarpieces, and with Muslim merchants. The Franciscan guides pointed out sacred places and relics, describing them loudly in several languages: Latin, Italian, German, French; the pilgrims commented on the witnessed miracles, wept in excitement, exclaimed enthusiastically, or prayed loudly. In fact, the full spiritual experience of the sacred space of the Holy Land could occur only after the return to one's home, and this is when written accounts became useful; to this end, pilgrims commissioned architectural or painterly souvenirs of the Passion.

The "script" devised by the Jerusalem Franciscans for the *Via Dolorosa* and the stations in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre defined the ritual as a spiritual exercise. However, judging from the pilgrims' accounts, because of the hostility of the Muslim inhabitants in the district, they rushed down the road without maintaining the liturgical ceremony of the Stations of the Cross, and were deprived of the chance for contemplative prayer. It seems that the meditative devotion to the Passion of Christ was more attainable in Europe through different reconstructions of the Road to Calvary: independent sites that recreated Golgotha, or the sculptural groups in the Passion chapels of various churches; or before painted and sculpted images whilst reading books about the suffering of Christ. The rushed experience of the holy site and the pressure of the hostile Muslim community left pilgrims' unsatisfied and in need of commissioning, upon their return – or in lieu of the actual pilgrimage – these sculpted and painted representations of the Road to Calvary. At times it seemed that the pilgrimage to the *Via Crucis* and the Holy Sepulchre did not constitute the final and complete devotional ritual; that it complemented the experience and assisted a pilgrim in reenacting it back at home. Martin Ketzell

from Nuremberg, who lost his notes from his pilgrimage, which included the precise measurements of distances between individual Stations of the Cross and sacred sites, returned to Jerusalem only to collect the data again and to commission and oversee the construction of the Road to Calvary in his hometown.⁵²⁸ The local recreation was the goal and the two pilgrimages, which merely played a preparatory role in achieving it. In 1476, two specialists were sent from Görlitz to the *Via Crucis* and the Holy Sepulchre, to take measurements, and upon their return they outlined the local Road to Calvary.⁵²⁹

Pilgrims travelled to two locations outside Jerusalem – to the banks of the Jordan river and to Bethlehem. Due to the challenges and risks of the journey, they were not compulsory stages of the pilgrimage. In the fifteenth century, more distant travels to the Sea of Galilee were rarely undertaken and only by those who had sojourned in Palestine over a long period of time. The two trips out of Jerusalem took place in the middle of the pilgrimage, before the visit to the Holy Sepulchre, its focal point. They lasted a day or a day and a half. The first journey began with the Mount of Temptation, known as the place where Christ was tempted for forty days (treated as a place on a hill, and not a symbolic holy mount), the place of the three temptations of Christ. Subsequently, pilgrims visited the Elisha Lake on the road to Jericho, with the house of Zacchaeus and other holy sites; further down the road they passed by the ruins of the church of St. John the Baptist and the site of the assumption of the prophet Elijah, and of the penance of Mary of Egypt. Finally, they arrived at the Jordan river, where John baptized Christ; where the pilgrims would fill their flasks with water believed to have healing properties and be miraculous. They walked to the bank of the Dead Sea, a great curiosity for the pilgrims, with its salty waters deprived of any lifeform: the cursed place that had consumed biblical cities, including Sodom and Gomorrah. They saw the place where Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt. On the way back, two and a half kilometers before Jerusalem, the pilgrims entered Bethany to see the house of Martha, Mary (identified with Mary Magdalene) and Lazarus. They saw the tomb of Lazarus, turned into a mosque, which was the site of the famous raising from the dead performed by Christ, and also the home of Simon, in which Christ was anointed by Mary (Magdalene).

Another journey outside Jerusalem led ten kilometers south from the city to Bethlehem. On the road the pilgrims visited places connected with the Three Magi and the Epiphany: they followed their thirteen-day route and stopped in places where the guiding star was sighted and where it had disappeared in a thick mist, which had enveloped the earth two miles before Jerusalem, (this event was moved in pilgrims' routes to the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem). They visited

528 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, p. 156.

529 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, p. 156.

the guesthouse, in which the Magi had stayed in Bethlehem, and in the Church of the Nativity the place where they had prepared their gifts for the Child, and the one in which they paid their respects. The main goal was to visit the *loca sacra* of the Church in Bethlehem, where Franciscan friars promoted the cult of the virginal motherhood of Mary, the cult of the Incarnation and Christ's infancy. The pilgrims accessed the Grotto of the Nativity; they looked at the site of the manger and of Christ's circumcision. Apart from the Church of the Nativity, they visited the Milk Grotto, where the Holy Family stayed before their flight into Egypt. Inside the grotto, the pilgrims admired the unusual colour of the rocks, believed to have been dyed with milk from the Virgin's breasts. Walking towards or from Bethlehem the pilgrims venerated another Marian site located on the confines of the city: a place where the Virgin had rested on the flight into Egypt, where she had sat by a cistern and taken water from it; the Kathisma church, erected to commemorate this site, was long ruined by the fifteenth century. On the road to and from Bethlehem the pilgrims visited sites related to Old Testament characters and events: the houses of Jacob and Rachel, and of Elijah; the location where David fought Goliath, and the house of Habakkuk.

VI.5. Mental pilgrimages and the visual aids

Another form of pilgrimage was the one conducted in the mind and imagination of the faithful – enacted spiritually, the *spiritualiter*.⁵³⁰ This was originally intended for those who could not physically travel: women, conventual friars and nuns, the sick, the elderly, the disabled, the imprisoned or the

530 **Mental (spiritual) pilgrimages:** A.M. Koldewei, "Lijfelijke en geestelijke pelgrimage: materiële 'souvenirs' van spirituele pelgrimage," in: *Geen povere schoonheid. Laat-middeleeuwse kunst in verband met de Moderne Devotie*, ed. K. Veelenturf, Nijmegen 2000, pp. 222–252; N. Miedema, "Geestelijke rijkdom: over pelgrimsreizen en aflaten in de Middeleeuwen," in: *Een school spierinkjes. Kleine opstellen over Middelnederlandse artes-literatuur*, ed. by W.P. Gerritsen, A. van Gijsen, O.S.H. Lie, Hilversum 1991, pp. 123–126; her, "Following in the Footsteps of Christ: Pilgrimage and Passion Devotion," in: *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture*, ed. A.A. MacDonald, H.N.B. Ridderbos, R.M. Schlusemann, Groningen 1998, pp. 73–92; K. Kopania, "Duchowa pielgrzymka po Jerozolimie. Obraz pasyjny z kościoła św. Jakuba w Toruniu," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 70, 2008, no. 1–2, pp. 91–112; K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent: Imagining Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages*, (Disciplina Monastica 8), Turnhout 2011; her, "Virtual Pilgrimage through the Jerusalem Cityscape," in: *Visual Constructs of Jerusalem*, ed. by B. Kühnel, G. Noga-Banai and H. Vorholt, Turnhout 2014, pp. 381–393. H. Luttkhuizen, "Still walking: Spiritual pilgrimage, Early Dutch painting, and the dynamics of faith," in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. I, pp. 199–226.

poor who could not afford the costly journey. It gradually became more widespread and was chosen by those who did not have the time and energy to plan the journey. The latter category included busy merchants and those who accepted the critique of pilgrimage offered by the communities promoting *devotio moderna*, which treated them as a mercantile way of obtaining indulgences through visiting different relics. The reformers advocated spiritual encounters with the divine rather than spectacular and expensive public rituals. The first text promoting mental pilgrimage, specifically to the *loca sacra* in Rome, and written to celebrate the jubilee of the year 1400, was *Modus quidam quo certis ex causis Romam ire non valentes in anno jubileo spiritualiter peregrinationem eamdem perficere possint*, was ascribed to Jean Gerson, a famous theologian at the Sorbonne in Paris. He called for the substitution of the actual pilgrimage with the mental variety during peak periods, when the crowds did not permit pious contemplation.

The fifteenth century saw an increased production of handbooks dedicated to mental pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jerusalem. The genre was developed by various orders, mostly the poor, mendicant and preaching friars. The Dominicans, and in particular those from Germany (including Henry Suso (1295–1366) and Felix Fabri (1437/1438–1502) encouraged the spiritual journey and advocated the two modes of spiritual pilgrimage: through the loud reading and repetition of the pilgrims' accounts to provide spiritual support for the souls of friars, and especially nuns; and also through the mnemonic, mental reenactment of the Passion of Christ, which frequently used the space of the monastery as the setting for the unfolding of imaginary events.⁵³¹ To an even greater extent Franciscans contributed to the development of these handbooks, as the order privileged by the mission to lead and assist pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and as the papal "custodians of the Latin quarter of Jerusalem" since 1342.⁵³² They developed popular guidebooks for religious tourism, which were also suitable for mental pilgrimage. These books were widely used in female Franciscan convents, by the Poor Clares and Tertiary nuns, and also by the Augustinian Black Sisters (popular in the Netherlands as *zwartsusters*, they differed from the Augustinian canon regular nuns). Even though this last group's activity was focused on practical issues, such as care at the hospitals, and although they did not concentrate

531 J. van Aelst, "Het gebruik van beelden bij Suso's lijdensmeditatie," in: *Geen povere schoonheid. Laat-middeleeuwse kunst in verband met de Moderne Devotie*, ed. K. Veelenturf, Nijmegen 2000, pp. 86–100; W. Carls, *Felix Fabri. Die Sionpilger*, Berlin 1999.

532 See for instance: P. Amadeus, "Aperçu historique sur la devotion au chemin de la croix," *Collectanea franciscana* 19, 1949, pp. 45–142; J. van Herwaarden, *Geloof en geloofsuitingen in de late Middeleeuwen...* Examples of such manuals for spiritual pilgrimages are analysed by K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, chapter I.

on meditation, they also adopted the practice of mental pilgrimage, creating their *besloten hofjes* – “enclosed gardens” (from *hortus conclusus*, the metaphor and the symbol of Mary’s virginity). These were in the form of sculptural triptychs, and were filled with pilgrim badges and souvenirs from the Holy Land.⁵³³ The Augustinian convents (canons regular of St. Augustine), including the Congregation of Windesheim, a monastic branch of the Brethren of the Common Life (the *devotio moderna* movement) produced (or simply owned) numerous manuscript devoted to spiritual pilgrimage. The market was dominated by nunneries, and especially by the Augustinian nuns. Nearly three-quarters of the late medieval manuscripts of this type, destined to be used by the nuns, came from this milieu (for instance from the Mosan monastery of St. Agnes in Maaseik, near Maastricht).⁵³⁴ The idea of the spiritual pilgrimage was also familiar to the Brigittines, which is unsurprising, since their fourteenth-century saintly patroness took part in pilgrimages to Rome and the Holy Land, where she experienced visions of the sacred events from the Gospels, as described in her writings. This is confirmed by the manuscript from an unknown convent in the region of the Utrecht diocese, with glued-in engravings (London, British Library, Add. 31001).⁵³⁵

However, the piety enacted through spiritual pilgrimage was by no means restricted to the enclosed world of the convents, or that of nunneries. It also thrived in the lay environment of cities, and in particular among pilgrim confraternities, commonly known as Jerusalem confraternities. In that context, the mental pilgrimage served to prepare for, to commemorate, or to substitute the experience of an actual, physical journey. This matter must still have been hotly debated in the early sixteenth century, as is evident in the jubilee sermon of Johannes Geiler von Kaysersperg. In Strasburg in 1500, the German preacher, an avid opponent of folk “superstitions” and of indulgences, provocatively asked himself and his congregation: ‘What should a criminal do, who is permanently locked in a prison and cannot be refused the right to enact his devotions? Can he also benefit from the indulgences of the jubilee granted to the pilgrims in Rome?’⁵³⁶ Since the journey from Strasburg to Rome lasted twenty one days, and visiting holy places and “scoring” indulgences another seven, perhaps he should undertake the pilgrimage spiritually: let him circulate around his cell without a break for twenty one days, after which he may pray continuously over the course of seven days, thinking about the relics and the miraculous places in Roman churches. Geiler deliberately reduced the problem *ad absurdum*, but that

533 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, pp. 110–118.

534 They are discussed in detail by Kathryn M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, pp. 92–97 and chapter II.2, pp. 130–146, appendix IV.

535 K. M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, chapter III.2, appendix VI.

536 A.M. Koldewij, *Lijfelijke en geestelijke pelgrimage...*, pp. 224–225.

only testifies to the considerable popularity of the late medieval procedure of spiritual pilgrimage, *spiritualiter*, to holy places.

A manuscript preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsénal in Paris is an example of a guidebook for the spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land (ms. 212) [figs. 570–581].⁵³⁷ It was created in Germany around 1467–1475. It consists of eleven cards, measuring 27.5 x 20.5cm, a format that is not very handy and portable; it was not a *vademecum* in the literal sense of the word (*vade-mecum*), but it was suitable for reading at home or in the convent. It assisted in stationary devotion. Unlike other similar texts, it describes only those holy places that granted indulgences to their visitors, and in particular the plenary and universal (marked on the margins with a cross, in a shape of the cross of the Kingdom of Jerusalem). The selection of the places follows the index of the indulgences granted in the Holy Land, as compiled by the Jerusalem-based Franciscan friar Cristoforo da Varese between 1467 and 1472. Unlike the majority of these works, limited to purely textual formats, the manuscript in Paris is richly decorated with ink drawings rhythmically embedded in the Latin text; the volume resembles a practical illustrated manual.



Fig. 570: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsénal, ms. 212, fol. 2r and 2v – *Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre*, view of the interior and exterior

537 K.M. Rudy, "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal ms. 212," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63, 2000, pp. 494–515; her, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent....*, chapter I.2, pp. 67–92.



Fig. 571: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. 212, fol. 3r – *Christ appearing to His Mother after the Resurrection* and *Noli me tangere*



Fig. 572: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 3v – *Flagellation* and *Christ Stripped of His Garments*



Fig. 573: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 4r – view of the church on Mount Zion and the *Last Supper*



Fig. 574: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 4v – *The Washing of the Feet* and *Pentecost*



Fig. 575: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 5r – *Doubting Thomas* and *The Dormition of the Virgin*

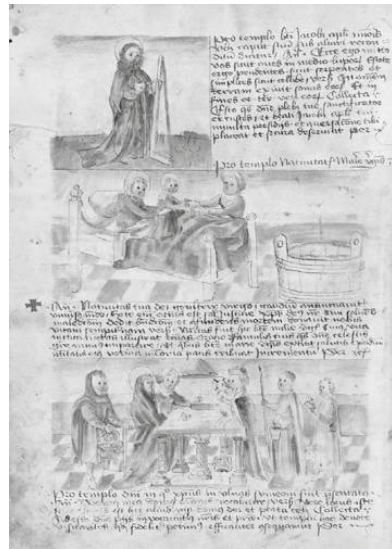


Fig. 576: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 5v – *St. James the Less*, *The Birth of the Virgin* and *the Presentation of Christ at the Temple*



Fig. 577: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 6r – *The Ascension* and *The Apostles formulating the Creed*



Fig. 578: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 6v – *The Nativity* and *the Adoration of Christ*



Fig. 579: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 7r – *The Adoration of the Magi and the Massacre of the Innocents*



Fig. 580: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 7v – *The Circumcision of Christ and the Raising of Lazarus*



Fig. 581: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 212, fol. 8r – *The Temptation of Christ and the Baptism in the Jordan*

Apart from the two first illustrations showing the facade of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the interior of the Chapel of the Sepulchre, depicted in a free and sketchy manner, (based on written accounts and not upon direct visual observation, fol. 2r–2v) [fig. 570], other illustrations have a canonical form of scenes from popular iconography: either Christological or Marian cycles. In general, they are not shown in a topographically accurate or even imaginatively visualised setting of a specific place from the itinerary of the actual pilgrimage. The specific building (The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with the chapel of the Sepulchre, and the chapels of the Apparition to the Virgin and the Apparition to Mary Magdalene; the chapel of the Cenacle from the sanctuary on Mount Sion; the interior of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem with the place of the Circumcision of Christ; the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus; the grotto of the Raising of Lazarus in Bethany) was marked only symbolically, in a way that did not reflect their actual form. The sequential order, which does not reflect the chronology or the narrative of the Gospels, but instead follows the itinerary of the pilgrimage curated by the Franciscans, includes scenes from sacred history, related to partial and plenary indulgences. The miniatures depict: *The Risen Christ Appearing to his Mother* (with a view of the chapel in the Church that commemorates the episode) and on the same page *The Apparition of Christ as a Gardener to Mary Magdalene (Noli me tangere)* (fol. 3r) [fig. 571]; *The Flagellation* and the *Division of the Robes and the Throwing of Dice by the Roman Soldiers* (fol. 3v) [fig. 572]; the view of the Church of Mount Sion and the *Last Supper* (fol. 4r) [fig. 573]; *The Washing of the Feet* and the *Pentecost* (fol. 4v) [fig. 574]; *Doubting Thomas* and the *Dormition of the Virgin* (fol. 5r) [fig. 575]; *St. James the Younger, The Birth of the Virgin* and the *Presentation of Christ at the Temple* (fol. 5v) [fig. 576]; *the Ascension of Christ* and *the Apostles formulating the Credo* (fol. 6r) [fig. 577]; *The Nativity* and *the Adoration of Christ in a Manger* (fol. 6v) [fig. 578]; *The Adoration of the Magi* and *the Massacre of the Innocents* (fol. 7r) [fig. 579]; *The Circumcision of Christ* and *the Raising of Lazarus* (fol. 7v) [fig. 580]; *The Temptation of Christ* and *the Baptism in Jordan* (fol. 8r) [fig. 581]. The illustrations are accompanied by texts that describe the events and the sacred places, or prayers celebrating a particular event. They open rhythmically with the words *Pro loco ubi...* – “To the place where ...” With an exception of the beginning that includes a view of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and a fragment of Psalm 147: *Lauda Iherusalem dominum...* (“Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem...”), and afterwards the text *Pro templo Sepulchri domini* with a fragment of the psalm, the antiphon and the collect. On the next page, below the depiction of the chapel (as if cut out of the Church of the Sepulchre, in which it actually stood, shown as an autonomous structure set in a landscape) and the scene

of the Apparition of Christ to the Virgin, there is a text more typical for the entire manuscript. It opens with a description: *Pro capella sanctae Mariae Virginis, ubi Christus a morte resurgens primo matri sue apparuit. Ibidem videtur statua ad quam Christus fuit flagellatus et ibidem inventa sancta cruce, mortuum cum ed tactum virtus Christi suscitavit* – “To the chapel of the Holy Virgin Mary, where the Risen Christ, after His death, appeared for the first time to his Mother, and where stands the column before which Christ was flagellated and where the holy cross, when touched, through the glory of Christ, resurrected the dead man.” Subsequently, there is a prayer composed of the antiphon and the collect. Below, beneath the image of *Noli me tangere*, is the text: *Pro loco ubi Jesus resurgens primo apparuit Marie Magdalene* – “To the place where the Risen Christ appeared for the first time to Mary Magdalene,” and the antiphon and the collect.

In the same way, through the image, the description of the place and the prayer, the reader is taken to other sites, also parts of the holy narrative, with assigned indulgences. In this way, the reader travelled imaginatively from place to place within the sacred districts: from the Church of the Sepulchre (fol. 2r) and its chapels (of the Sepulchre – fol. 2v, of the Apparition to the Virgin and of the *Noli me Tangere* – fol. 3r), through the building adjacent to the Church with Christ’s Prison (*the Flagellation* and the *Division of Christ’s Garments* – fol. 3v), to Mount Sion, towards the Chapel of the Cenacle (the *Last Supper*, the *Washing of the Apostles’ Feet* – fol. 4r and 4v) and to the places where Christ appeared to the Apostles and convinced Doubting Thomas of His authority, and the sites of Pentecost and the Dormition of the Virgin, associated with the Cenacle or with the neighbouring house of St. John the Evangelist (fol. 4v–5r). On Mount Sion the mental pilgrimage led the reader to the place of the cult of St. James the Elder and his beheading, next to the birthplace of the Virgin – a grotto in the Church of St. Anne, between Sion and Mount Moriah (the Temple Mount); next to the place of the Presentation of Christ at the Temple, either still on Sion in the Nea Church (The New Church of the Theotokos) and Solomon’s Temple on Mount Moriah (fol. 5v). The mental pilgrimage continued onto the next holy district – to the Mount of Olives, visiting in his/her imagination the place of the Ascension and the discussion of the Credo by the Apostles (fol. 6r). On other pages the pilgrim saw the holy places outside Jerusalem, beginning with Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity with the grotto and the place of Christ’s Circumcision. The illustrations included the Nativity, the Adoration of the Christ Child, the Adoration of the Magi and – located between Jerusalem and Bethlehem – the Massacre of the Innocents (fol. 6v–7r), and on the next page the scene of the Circumcision (fol. 7v). The same page included the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany and the grotto of the raising of Lazarus (depicted as an open

chapel adjacent to the house of the siblings), from which the pilgrim moved to the Mount of Temptation and to the Jordan river, to the site of Christ's Baptism (fol. 8r). In concluding their spiritual pilgrimage, the reader prayed to the illustrations of the Holy Face on St. Veronica's veil, the *Arma Christi* and the painting of the *Vir dolorum* from Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, as well as to a monstrance containing a host, adored by an angel. These objects complemented the pilgrimage, they were not preserved *in situ*, but enshrined in other locations (in Rome, the relic of the *veraikon*, the miraculous icon of the *Vir dolorum* transported from the Holy Land to Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, or a monstrance in the same church).

Even though the route of the spiritual pilgrimage – from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, through Sion and the Mount of Olives to journeys to Bethlehem and Jordan – does not correspond with the traditional itinerary of actual pilgrimages, it continues to reflect a specific spatial and topographical sequence. As a guide for mental and imaginary journeys the book had a difficult task, as neither the illustrations of buildings, nor the scenery of the landscape captured the real nature of the Holy Land, and therefore did not provide the basis for a more developed and detailed mental image. The aim of the guidebook was not to create in the mind of the faithful a realistic, geographic image of the land, where the sacred history of salvation took place, but a spiritual, *stricte* devotional, pilgrimage following the steps of Christ, the Virgin and the Apostles, that helped readers to remember the sacred events and to obtain the related indulgences.

The historic owner of the manuscript read it thoroughly and with clear passion, in excitement: he/she rubbed or scratched in vengeance the evil faces of the tormentors in the *Flagellation*, of Judas in the *Last Supper*, of the soldiers in the *Massacre of the Innocents*, and finally of Satan in the *Temptation of Christ*. In this case, s/he did not kiss in ecstasy the holy faces, as in the prayer book from the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels (chapter III.1.1). Here the user acted differently, though with the same energy. The anger and hostility directed towards the tormentors, the traitor Judas and Satan can be observed in the large-scale painted Passion Panoramas, depicting Jerusalem and the Holy Land, which served the mental and spiritual pilgrimage, and provided access to indulgences (see the following chapter). This practice confirms the intensity of the frequently violent urge that characterised people wishing, even if only in spirit, to feel and to participate in the Passion of Christ and the Virgin's emotions; to follow their experiences and identify with them, and to thereby obtain the desired absolution of sins and thus the right to future salvation.

Frequently, the handbooks of spiritual pilgrimage substituted the visualisation of the actual pilgrimage in Jerusalem with a realistic "walk" through an imagined Jerusalem. The texts of prayers that were included motivated the body to physical action, and the arrangement, the content and the

description of certain places encouraged readers to embark on a “road” down the stations to the imagined holy places using the real, local space of the faithful.

In the Late Middle Ages, the mobile actions during prayer and meditation were a kind of training practice. Created for nuns or devout women from the Southern Netherlands in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, manuscript IG 26 from the Universiteitsbibliotheek in Amsterdam includes a text, based on the writings of the mystic Magdalena of Freiburg (1407–1458), which narrates the conversation of a devout virgin with Christ (219r–222v).⁵³⁸ Christ instructs her how to conduct seven meditations over his Passion, concluding each meditation with a *Gloria Patris* as a chorus. The text includes guidelines that are almost choreographic. Over the course of seven meditations and prayers, the mystic had to assume poses that resembled the physical appearance of Christ during the Passion. When she pondered upon the Agony in the Garden (on the Mount of Olives), she had to get down on her knees, and get up again, walk slowly following His imagined steps, and then stand still, just as Christ was tied to the column during the Flagellation. She should then sit down when she imagined the crowning of thorns; when she meditated upon the Road to Calvary, she had to kneel and bend her body to the ground as if suffering under the weight of the cross, and then stand up bringing her arms forward; finally, meditating upon the Crucifixion she had to stretch her arms sideways, and whilst contemplating the moment of the crucifixion, she had to bring her body forward, forming an arch, just like Christ hanging from the cross. Similar devotional, physical exercises are described in manuscript II 3688 from the Bibliotheque Royale in Brussels, created shortly after 1513 by an anonymous Franciscan friar from the diocese in Liège, written in Netherlandish, containing a set of prayers for specific days of the week and mystic texts by Henry Suso.⁵³⁹ The manuscript includes prayers for Holy Week that encouraged the faithful to imitate Christ in assuming specific poses: to kneel when contemplating the Agony in the Garden; to utter loudly, and not only read silently, the prayer when following the imagined footsteps of Christ in Jerusalem, all the while stepping on local ground. Clearly the believer had to walk, pray in motion, and assume specific poses.

Imitatio Christi by Thomas à Kempis (*De imitatione Christi*, 1418–1427) – promoted by the *devotio moderna* movement within the milieu of spiritual renovation, and promoted through mystics, assumes a thoroughly

538 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, pp. 171–172.

539 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, pp. 192–195, and appendix VII-A.

somatic form in these prayer manuals. The imitation of Christ means the physical mimicking of his body, and prayer and meditation are transformed through the movement of the faithful body. This allowed devotees to fully adhere to the principle of *conformitas* – the identification of the believer with the saintly figure, which he/she venerates and prays to.

The mental pilgrimage appealed not only to bodily movement, but also to the basic somatic experience of the faithful. This is clear in the manuscript Add. 31001 from the British Library, London (c. 1500 created in one of the Netherlandish monasteries of the Bridgettines).⁵⁴⁰ Written in Netherlandish, it contains seven different guidebooks for virtual pilgrimages: five to Rome, one to the Holy Land, and one that connected the two pilgrim destinations, entitled *How to visit Seven Main Churches of Rome [basilicae maiores] as if one visited the Holy Land* (a journey through Rome indicating places with relics and souvenirs from the Holy Land was one of the contemporary pilgrimage standards).⁵⁴¹ In the last guidebook, the sequence of prayers opening and concluding with the prayer of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane suggests that the nuns had to visualize or even reenact the events of the Passion in their own “garden” – their *hoffje, hoefkijn*; the cloister – beginning with the Agony in the Garden and finishing with the Ascension. The guidebook of the Holy Land described the sacred places and provides prayers related to the entire history of the life of Christ and the Virgin, from the moment when they are each born, to the Passion and Resurrection. It is a manual of spiritual exercises, based on physical actions, activating the body of the faithful devotee in prayer. In this case, the order of the events follows the chronology of the Gospels, and not the topography of the pilgrimage, which is unusual for this literary genre. The specific meditative prayers should be read according to the liturgical times of the day (matins, lauds, prime, terce, sext, none, vespers and compline). The texts in the rubric links the evangelical events to moments in the nuns’ lives: the times of their prayers and meals. For instance, regarding the birth of St. John the Baptist one should read during lunch at noon on Mondays, during the office of none, the text on fol. 86v which reads: *Hout hier u maeltijt mit Maria ende Elisabeth*: “Now eat a meal with Mary and Elisabeth.” And during compline one had to contemplate the moment when Mary and Joseph were refused a place to stay in Bethlehem (fol. 88r–89r), which is accompanied by the phrase: *Hout hier u aventmael mit Maria ende Joseph* – “Now dine

540 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, chapter III.2, pp. 175–192, and appendix VI-C.

541 See for instance H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, pp. 310–339.

with Mary and Joseph.” On Tuesdays, during vespers and compline, the faithful had two similar “meals with Christ, Mary and Joseph,” to ponder the Flight into Egypt and Christ among the Doctors. There were other narratives similarly linked with meals. The texts of the prayers corresponded with the everyday and mundane experiences of the nuns; for instance, when thinking about Christ’s sojourn in Bethany, in the house of Mary and Martha, they had to experience hunger and thirst. On Thursdays, after compline, the nuns had to go to bed thinking about the Apostles who fell asleep at the foot of the Mount of Olives, during Christ’s Agony in the Garden. These parallels located, or at least grounded the pilgrimage to the holy sites and the events in Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, the banks of the Jordan River, Mount Tabor, Bethany and other *loca sacrae* in the space of one’s convent; in its church, refectory, cells, cloister and in the governing temporality, the measurements of time divided into weeks and hours. Some phrases written on the margins are directed specifically to the nun-reader: during matins on Tuesday she had to meditate upon the Nativity and imagine the Christ Child: “playing and touching you with His little hands [extending the arms to you]” (...ende speelde mit sijn cleyne handekijns tegen u”). She had to visualise the Child in a manger or in a crib, one similar to the surviving examples from the female convents in Germany and the Netherlands (such as the Brabant wooden crib from the Great Beguinage in Ghent, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York).⁵⁴²

A copy of the book printed in Antwerp in 1518 (inv. no. 231 G 22 in Koninklijk Bibliotheek at the Hague),⁵⁴³ which constitutes a model example of the manual for spiritual pilgrimage undertaken locally, and not in the Holy Land, includes woodcuts with scenes from the Gospel predominantly related to the Passion. Three subsequent owners – most likely the nuns from the congregation of the canons regular – added to the margins some meaningful notes, additions and comments to the main text, written in the name of one “Lord of Bethlehem” (*Heer Bethlem*), who imaginatively walked across Jerusalem in the consecutive days of the week. The notes on the margins written by one of them (hand A) point to specific places in which the female or male reader had to pray meditatively; these refer to the moments of the sojourn of Christ in Jerusalem and to his Passion, which

542 G. Kaldewei, *Beginen – Sustern – Vrome Vrouwen...*, pp. 163–169; C.W. Bynum, *Christian Materiality...*, pp. 62–63; I. Ippel, *A Christmas Crib as a Meek Heart...*, pp. 331–332; A. LeZotte, *Cradling Power...*, pp. 75–77, 80, 82; C.W. Bynum, *Encounter: Holy Beds*, pp. 129–131; P. Barnet, *A Recently Acquired Christ Child...*, p. 213. Cf. note 293.

543 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, chapter III.A-B and appendix VIII.

are depicted in the woodcuts. During the Last Supper, in the evening or at night from Sunday to Monday, the praying nun stood “in the corridor [or in a cloister] by the infirmary, by the middle gate” (*in den sickhous ganck an de medel doïr*). Later, on Monday, she moved down the corridor from the local chapel of St. Anne to the spiral staircase, and in the middle of the cloister or the corridor (*ganck*) of the infirmary she dropped to her knees to commemorate the Agony in the Garden. When she pondered upon Judas’s Betrayal and the Arrest of Christ, depicted in the next woodcut, she knelt by the calefactory of the monastery. On Tuesday she contemplated in her prayers the image of Christ before Annas, while she walked towards the *spinhoüs* – the weaving mill. Later that day she meditated upon the trials of Christ before Caiaphas and Pilate, during her prayers in the *pandt* – the main cloister – which she continued on Wednesday by the *water housken* – a pavilion or a building with water, the *lavabo* (also in the cloister). On Wednesday before the contemplation of Pilate’s washing of his hands, she had to walk around the cloister three times, and this moment was defined in a note made by a different hand (hand B) as the “first station” of the *Via Crucis*. It was followed by other stations, marked on the margins by the same hand: on Wednesday the Carrying of the Cross and the Fall under the Cross; on Thursday Christ Stripped of His Garments, the Meeting of Christ with His Mother, the Meeting with Veronica, the offering of Veronica’s veil; on Friday the Crucifixion, and on Saturday the Lamentation. In this way, on specific days of the week, a nun brought the book with her to specific places in the convent, to examine the woodcuts, to visualise the scenes from the Passion and to pray. She travelled across the imagined Jerusalem, following the path of Christ’s suffering, but she did not sit down in meditative contemplation of the guidebook to activate her imagination. In fact, she began her short-distance pilgrimage by acting in movement, walking along the Road to Calvary stage by stage. The text provides her with all the details about the distances. For instance, from the imagined place of the Last Supper (on Jerusalem’s Mount Sion) to the site of the Agony in the Garden (on the Mount of Olives) “there are three thousand and five hundred ells” (*dat sijn xxxv hondert ellen*); to the house of Annas two thousand five hundred ells, and to that of Caiaphas eighty nine, and so on. This meant that the nun had to walk these distances within the confines of the convent. A different set of comments on the margins inscribed at times by the first hand, and sometimes by the third hand (hand C), specify the number of circles around a specific space or the number of times a specific route should be followed; for instance, the distance between the Cenacle and the Mount of Olives had to be crossed twenty seven times to achieve the distance between these sites according to the real topography of Jerusalem. Following Christ’s footprints compelled the faithful to walk a specific number of steps, a distance, which imitated the distances between the holy places in the actual Holy Land.

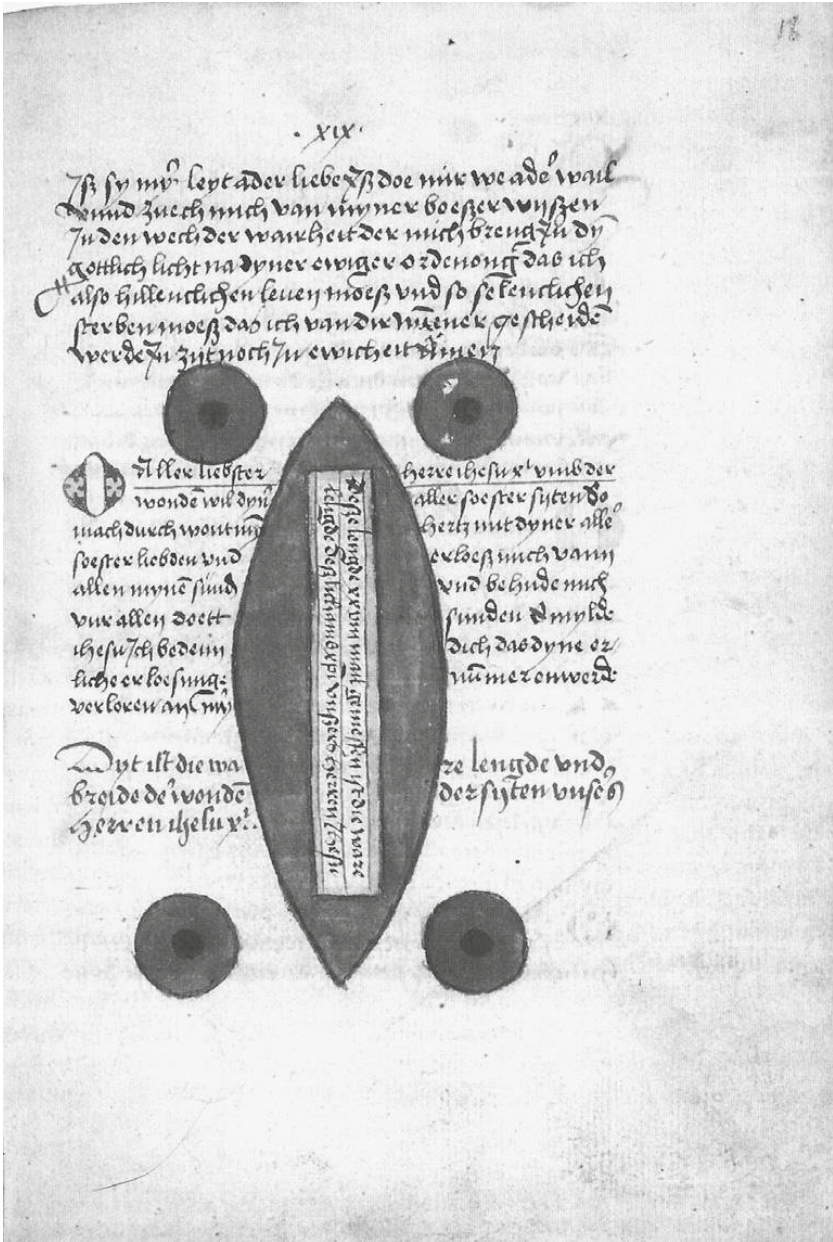


Fig. 582: Guidebook of the Spiritual Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 10758, fol. 18r – measurements of Christ’s body, inscribed in the wound in Christ’s side

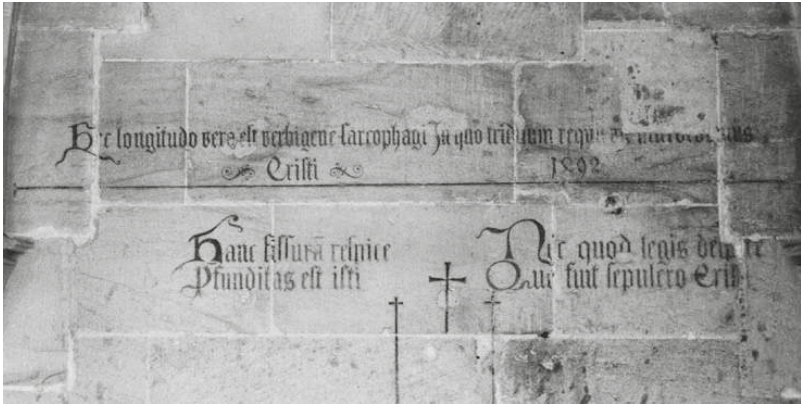


Fig. 583: 'Holy Measurements relics' – lines indicating the length of Christ's body and of his tomb, 1492, Bebenhausen, cloister of the Cistercian monastery

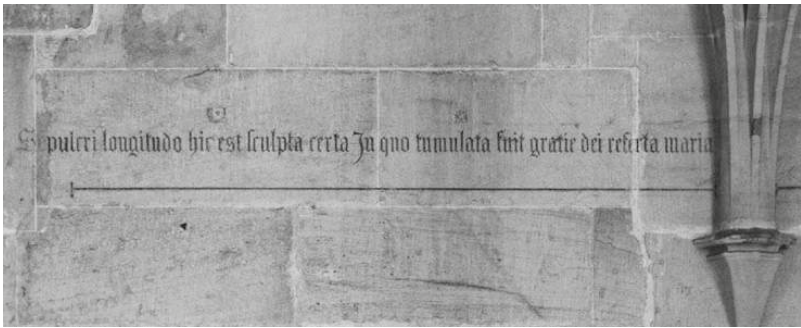


Fig. 584: 'Holy Measurements relics' – lines indicating the length of Mary's tomb, 1492, Bebenhausen, cloister of the Cistercian monastery



Fig. 585: Bebenhausen, cloister of the Cistercian monastery, with the Holy Measurements engraved on the wall

The measuring of the holy distances is typical for pilgrimages, whether real or imagined. A number of manuals for spiritual journeys and the accounts of actual pilgrimages to the Holy Land define specific measurements and distances that are understood as holy: the length of Christ's body, the length and width of the wound in His side, the length of His feet, which left traces on the *Via Dolorosa* in Sion; the height and width of the beams of the cross, *etc.* They constituted a sort of "metric relic."⁵⁴⁴ They are frequently depicted in manuscript illuminations (such as the one from manuscript 10758 at the Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels, which shows the wound in Christ's side with information inscribed in it noting that it is the twenty-eighth part of His body) [fig. 582]. We know that in the Holy Land the souvenirs of holy measurements were sold in great numbers. Peter Rindfleisch, for instance, brought to Wrocław a bundle of ropes, bought in Jerusalem for a quarter florin, which had the length of the Holy Sepulchre and the length of the Tomb of the Virgin Mary.⁵⁴⁵ The awareness of the scale of sacred sites and objects, and of the distances between various places assisted in mental pilgrimage, adding something tangible and material to the meditative and contemplative experience. That is why on the walls of convents and cloisters, for instance in the Cistercian Bebenhausen Monastery, near Tübingen in Swabia (1492), there are engraved lines clearly described as indicating the length of Christ's body, or of his sarcophagus, and similar measurements related to the Virgin [figs. 583–584]. It is not difficult to imagine a friar navigating these spaces with a book, in a meditative journey in the footsteps of Christ and the Virgin in the Holy Land, consumed by the thought of obtaining the numerous indulgences attached to various sites along the road [fig. 585].

VI.6. Reconstructions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the *Via Crucis*

Reconstructions of the church of the Holy Sepulchre and of the *Via Crucis* were immensely popular in the Northern Europe, acting as visible commemorations of the actual pilgrimage, or as instruments that assisted in spiritual pilgrimage.⁵⁴⁶

544 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, chapter I.2, pp. 97–107.

545 H. Manikowska, *Jerozolima – Rzym – Compostela...*, p. 68.

546 *Jerusalemkirchen – mittelalterliche Kleinarchitekturen nach dem Modell des Heiligen Grabes*, ed. by J. Pieper, A. Naujokat, A. Kappler, exh. cat., Aachen 2003; A. Naujokat, "Imitations of the Holy Sepulchre and the Significance of 'Holy Measures,'" in: *Jerusalem elsewhere*, ed. by B. Kühnel, P. Arad, Jerusalem 2014, pp. 13–21; S.E. Lenzi, *The Stations of the Cross: The placelessness of medieval Christian piety*, Turnhout 2016; *Tomb and Temple: Re-imagining the sacred buildings of Jerusalem*, ed. by R. Griffith-Jones, Woodbridge 2018.

The procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges, recorded in written sources since 1291, was a symbolic re-enactment of the Road to Calvary. During the feast of the Elevation of the Cross, celebrated on 3rd May, the relics of Christ's blood were carried in a festive procession. According to a legend they were brought back from a crusade in 1150 by the Count of Flanders, Thierry of Alsace, and in 1310 Pope Clement V granted a plenary indulgence to pious visitors of the relics. They were believed to protect the city from plagues and other dangers. Other relics carried in the procession included the relics of the True Cross (preserved in the main city church of Onze-Lieve-Vrouw), of the Holy Thorn (from the Parish church of Christ the King), and the holy remains of various saints. The festivities were joined by citizens and members of various guilds, such as The High Confraternity of the Holy Blood (Edele Confrérie van het Heilig Bloed). This prestigious brotherhood was created around 1400 to take care of the relics, and brought together the highest ranking patricians and members of the city council, and usually the Dukes of Brabant and Burgundy as well. The procession walked across the entire city, both its centre and suburbs. The participants sang the psalms and recreated in the form of *tableaux vivants* events from the Passion. In this way, the movement across the city mimicked the pilgrimage down the streets of Jerusalem. Bruges became the New Jerusalem, and the participants in the procession became spiritual pilgrims of the Holy City.⁵⁴⁷

The aforementioned Jerusalem Church – Jeruzalemkerk – was a part of this tradition, built by the Adornes family between 1435 and 1483 [fig. 562].⁵⁴⁸ Situated at the edge of the city, it consists of a chapel with a polygonal tower, under which there is a crypt with a carved Holy Sepulchre and a rectangular nave. This has an altar in the form of a “white rock” – a stone block with a relief representation of the *Arma Christi* and the three crosses from the Calvary above.

547 See for instance K.D. Lilley, *City and Cosmos: The Medieval World in Urban Form*, London 2009, chapter V: *Performing Bodies*.

548 **Jeruzalemkerk in Bruges:** J. Gailliard, *Recherches sur l'Eglise de Jérusalem à Bruges*, Bruges 1843; J. Esther, “Monumentenbeschrijving en bouwgeschiedenis van de Jeruzalemkapel,” in: *Adornes en Jeruzalem*, ed. N. Geirnaert, A. Vandewalle, exh. cat. Jeruzalemkerk, Bruges 1983; B. Beernaert et al., “De Jeruzalemkerk,” in: *15de-eeuwse architectuur in Brugge. Open Monumentendag*, Bruges 1992; B. Beernaert et al., “De Jeruzalemkerk,” in: *Via Europa, reisverhalen in steen. Open Monumentendag*, Brugge 1999; J.-L. Meulemeester, “De Jeruzalemkapel in Brugge, enkele summiere aanvullingen,” *Brugs Ommeland* 2012, pp. 162–168; N. Blontrock, “De historische Adornessite aan de Jeruzalemkapel,” *Brugge die Scone*, 2017.

Similarly, the Jerusalem Chapel by the Church of St. John in Gouda (c. 1497–1504) [fig. 586] commemorates a pilgrimage.⁵⁴⁹ Gijsbrecht Raet, the vicar of the church of St. John, travelled to the Holy Land sometime between 1478 and 1487, and probably around 1485, when, after the return, he commissioned the imaginative Gothic “replica” of the Jerusalem building. Behind the rectangular nave with the altar, there is a centralised, twelve-sided space that recalls the rotunda of the Anastasis in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; fittingly, there was a wooden sculpture of Christ’s Tomb.



Fig. 586: Jerusalem Chapel of the Church of St. John in Gouda, c. 1497–1504

549 **Jerusalem Chapel in Gouda:** A.L.H. Hage, “‘Die stede van der Goude’ en ‘die gloriose ende die heylighe stadt van Jerusalem’”. Enkele Goudse pelgrimageteksten uit de vijftiende eeuw,” in: N.D.B. Habermehl et al., *In de stad van die Goude*, Delft 1992, pp. 69–82; R. Glaudemans, R. Gruben, I. Laarakkers, K.J. Steehouwer, *De Jeruzalemkapel in Gouda*, Gouda 1998.



Fig. 587: Augustinian Church in Edington (Wiltshire)

The chapel of the Holy Sepulchre next to the Augustine monastery church in Edington, England (Wiltshire) [fig. 587], built by William Wey (1407–1476), has not survived to our times, but its content is described in inventories.⁵⁵⁰ Wey – a known scholar and clergyman, canon of Exeter and Eton – went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1458 and 1462, and to Santiago de Compostela in 1456. After his return in the 1460s he began working on a kind of mnemonic edifice which commemorated the places and things seen during his journey to Palestine. It was probably on his request that the building was transformed into a quasi-defensive structure, with characteristic crenellations, which bring to mind the “walls of Jerusalem” (a common feature in buildings designed to evoke the “new Jerusalem” – for instance the Jerusalem Chapel in Westminster). He probably erected a chapel “*made to the liknes of the sepulkyr of owre Lorde at Jerusalem*” on the site of the present-day cemetery, before the church’s western façade, as recorded in the inventory preserved in Oxford (Bodleian Library MS Bodley 565). The inventory described that the interior was decorated by numerous tapestries and paintings on canvas, showing biblical scenes, including: “*Owre Lorde with a spade in his hande* and *The tempyl of Jerusalem*.” Relics were also preserved there – mostly stones brought from Palestine. The chapel also housed two maps: one of the Holy Land (in a manuscript today in the Bodleian Library, Oxford MS Douce 389) and a map of the world (*mappa*

550 See note 526.

mundi). Among the books of key importance were the *Itineraries* from the pilgrimage of Wey. He commissioned the set of Holy Measurements (the “metric relics”), created on *bordys*, wooden panels or wooden paneling on walls. They showed the length of the Christ’s tomb, the height and the width of the portal leading to the Jerusalem Chapel of the Sepulchre, and the size of Christ’s footprints left on the Mount of Olives. The refectory contained models of the holy buildings: churches in Bethlehem, and on the Mount of Olives in the Josaphat Valley. Near the bell tower Wey erected a replica of the Holy Sepulchre with “two buildings” (“*the sepulker of oure Lorde with too howses*” – perhaps Christ’s Prison and the Chapel of the Crucifixion, the so-called building of Golgotha, or a chapel dedicated to St. Helena; perhaps it was an echo of the dual structure of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the rotunda of Anastasis and the Church). In this way, Wey created a mnemonic space, filled with souvenirs and relics, which allowed to him undertake the pilgrimage in memory or in imagination.

The numerous chapels of *Via Crucis* and many Calvaries, built or carved near churches or chapels, functioned as mnemonic devices based on doloristic devotion relating to the Passion and Resurrection. The sculpted, multifigure groups for chapels, such as the Road to Calvary of the Krapp family (now in the National Museum, Warsaw) from the chapel in the church of St. Elizabeth in Wrocław, adapted as a family chapel by Hans Krapp in 1477 [fig. 588]⁵⁵¹ served a devotion based on meditation, prayer and contemplation, allowing a spiritual pilgrimage on the imagined route from the Mount of Olives to Golgotha to be conducted in a single place. Works that formed the stations of the cross were embedded in facades or set in a landscape, such as the set of seven stone reliefs by Adam Kraft, created in the 1490s, and in 1506–1508 placed in Nuremberg, from the House of Pilate in the Old Town to the cemetery of the church of St. John [fig. 589].⁵⁵²

551 J. Kostowski, “‘... da unser Herr im Garten knieet...’ Dawna kaplica Krappów przy kościele Świętej Elżbiety we Wrocławiu,” in: *Architektura Wrocławia*, vol. III, ed. J. Rozpędowski, Wrocław 1997, pp. 109–126.

552 Adam Kraft, *The Road to Calvary in Nuremberg*: R. Zittlau, *Heiliggrabkapelle und Kreuzweg. Eine Bauaufgabe in Nürnberg um 1500*, (Nürnberger Werkstücke zur Stadt- und Landesgeschichte 49), Nuremberg 1992, pp. 6–10; S. Wegmann, “Der Kreuzweg von Adam Kraft in Nürnberg. Ein Abbild Jerusalems in der Heimat,” *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg (MVGN)*, 84, 1997, pp. 93–117; A. Schineller, “Jerusalem in Nuremberg: Adam Kraft’s Stations of the Cross and the Holy Sepulchre,” in: *Jerusalem elsewhere*, pp. 63–78; J. Schulz, “The reliefs of Adam Kraft in Nuremberg: ‘Imitatio’ Christi and the veneration of the ‘Via Crucis,’” in: *Jerusalem elsewhere...*, pp. 49–61; F.M. Kammel et al., *Adam Kraft – Der Kreuzweg*, exh. cat., Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg 2018. Currently copies of the reliefs are preserved in the church and original sculptures are located in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, the Crucifixion Group (Christ and the Good and the Bad Thieves on the Crosses) in the courtyard of Heilig-Geist-Hospital, and the station of the Entombment in Holzschuherkapelle in Nuremberg.

These provided a setting for the processions held on Good Friday. The number of the stations was not fixed, and ranged between seven and thirteen (today's set, which includes fourteen stages, was only introduced in the seventeenth century). These included, selectively: The Agony in the Garden, the Betrayal of Christ, the Sanhedrin Trial, The Denial of St. Peter, the Flagellation and the Crowning of Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, the Fall under the cross, the scene with Simon of Cyrene helping with the cross, the Meeting with the Holy Women, with the Virgin and with Veronica, the Crucifixion, the Elevation of the Cross, the Suffering of the Virgin under the cross, the Death of Christ, the Descent from the Cross, and the Entombment; sometimes the cycle was expanded to include the scene of the Resurrection.



Fig. 588: Workshop from Breslau/Wrocław, *The Way of the Cross of the Krapp Family*, Krapp Family Chapel in the church of St. Elizabeth in Breslau/Wrocław, c. 1480–1500, Warsaw, National Museum

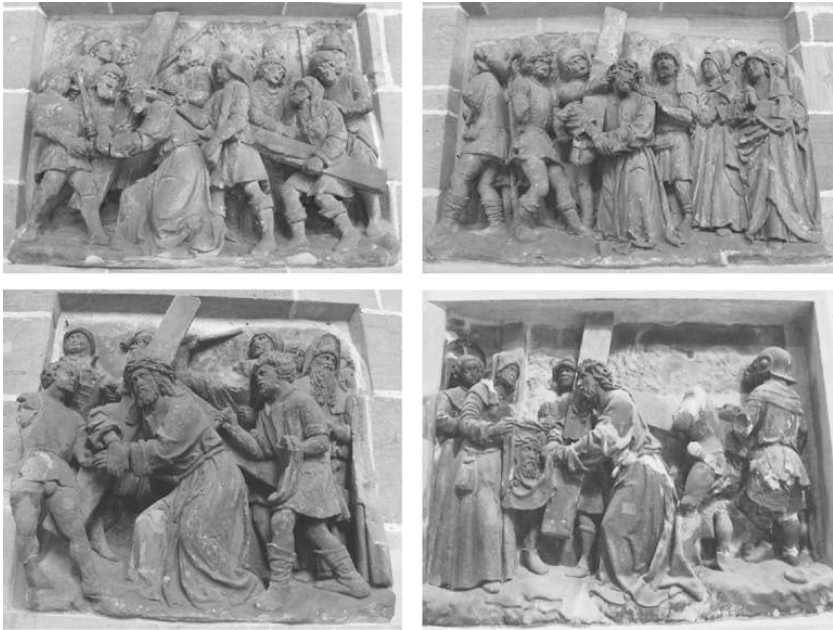


Fig. 589: Adam Kraft, *The Stations of the Cross* in Nuremberg, four reliefs, 1490s

The first stationary Roads to Calvary appeared very early, as early as the fifth century – the group of chapels of the Santo Stefano church in Bologna. However, the actual processional devotion based on the roads of crusaders was only developed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, primarily under the influence of the Franciscans, who promoted this type of piety and its cult across Europe. The local *via sacra* also became a compulsory component of the German cityscape, with structures described in the written accounts of: Ahrweiler (1440), Lübeck (1468), Nördlingen (1473), Fulda (1475), Berlin (1484), Edigerberg on the Moselle (1488), Nuremberg (1490), Höchstätt (1491), Heide in Schleswig (1496), Trier (1498), and, towards the very end of the century – in Görlitz, Neu-Ruppin, Schievelbein, Perleberg, Emmerich and Herrenberg. In the early sixteenth century, they appeared in nearly every German town, but also in many Netherlandish cities, such as Leuven, Mechelen, Vilvorde, Nijmegen, and Antwerp.⁵⁵³

553 **Road to Calvary in Bologna:** S. Guazzotti, “L’immagine della Gerusalemme celeste. Il complesso di Santo Stefano a Bologna,” in: *Le rotonde del Santo Sepolcro*, ed. by P. Pierotti, C. Tosco, C. Zannella, Bari 2005, pp. 91–100; B. Borghi, *In viaggio verso la Terrasanta. La Basilica di Santo Stefano in*

VI.7. Images from the Lives of Christ and the Virgin in the context of spiritual pilgrimage

Since the concept of pilgrimage to the Holy Land, whether real or (in particular) imagined, was so strongly present in the religiosity and customs of the Late Middle Ages, could this have left no impact on the iconography of contemporary paintings and sculptures? The art of the time widely depicted themes from the story of Christ and the Virgin, which were inextricably linked with holy places: Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Bethlehem, the Jordan, Jerusalem, Mount Sion, the Mount of Olives, and Golgotha. They are constantly present as the background against which specific episodes unfold in painted and sculpted altarpieces, panel paintings, cycle of miniatures, or reliefs. Does art in these representations develop the theme of pilgrimage? Yes; but not always, and not everywhere.

I would argue against Matthew Botvinick (1992),⁵⁵⁴ who proposed that seemingly every image of a donor against a background depicting the Holy Land was a reference to an actual pilgrimage undertaken by that person, or an evocation of the condition of spiritual pilgrimage: in the scene on Golgotha (for instance in the Entombment from the *Seilern Triptych* by the Master of Flémalle, from the Courtauld Institute, London); in the depiction of the house of the Holy Family in Nazareth (in numerous Annunciations, for instance in the *Mérode Altarpiece* by the Master of Flémalle and his assistants, including the young Rogier van der Weyden, in the Metropolitan Museum, New York); in the scene of the Nativity in Bethlehem (for instance

Bologna, Argelato 2010; her, “In viaggio verso la Terrasanta. La basilica di Santo Stefano in Bologna,” in: *Come a Gerusalemme*, ed. by A. Benvenuti, P. Piatti, Florence 2013, pp. 577–607. **Kreuzwege in German and Central European cities**: K.A. Kneller, *Geschichte der Kreuzwegandacht von den Anfängen bis zur völligen Ausbildung*, Freiburg 1908, especially pp. 27–34 and 56–80; E. Kramer, *Kreuzweg und Kalvarienberg. Historische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Kehl b. Straßburg 1957; M. Kalinová, “Kalvarienberge und Kreuzwege in der Slowakei als Wallfahrtsorte,” in: *Wallfahrten in der europäischen Kultur*, ed. by D. Doležal, H. Kühne, Frankfurt 2006, pp. 525–540; B. Bäumer, “Der Kreuzweg des Lübecker Kaufmanns Hinrich Konstin,” in: *Von Jakobi bis Jerusalem. Deutschlands ältester Kreuzweg in Lübeck*, ed. by B. Bäumer, C. Schophuis, Petersberg 2008, pp. 11–26; H. Kühne, “Kreuzwege, Heilig-Kreuz-Kapellen und Jerusalem-pilger im Raum der mittleren Elbe um 1500,” in: *Heiliges Grab – Heilige Gräber, Aktualität und Nachleben von Pilgerorten*, ed. U. Röper et al., Berlin 2014, pp. 44–54; S.E. Lenzi, *The Stations of the Cross: The placelessness of medieval Christian piety*, Turnhout 2016.

554 M. Botvinick, “The Painting as Pilgrimage: Traces of a subtext in the work of Campin and his contemporaries,” *Art History* 15, 1992, no. 1, pp. 1–18.

in the Adoration of the Magi in the *Columba Altarpiece* by Rogier in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich); or in any other *locus sacer*. Moreover, it seems unlikely that such works functioned as “proxies” of an actual pilgrimage, with the patron who commissioned an image of the holy event by including his or her portrait in the scene “taking part” in the pilgrimage and thus receiving the related indulgence. It is a stretched interpretation, which rejects common sense. Moreover, the creation of images as substitutes of pilgrimages and warrants for the absolution of sins would have been too much for the Late Medieval fear of idolatry. Saying a prayer before a painting is one thing; a painting functioning as equal to an indulgence – no! This latter understanding of miraculous images focused only on the sacred figures, holy images and relics; however, the efficacy of the indulgences resulted not from a standard commission for a work of art, but from the bull or papal decision that empowered the indulgences themselves.

Indeed, images of this type included allusions to travels and pilgrimages, but these hints were neither universal, nor did they define the final religious message conveyed by the work. A long, spiral road depicted in the background behind the donor of the *Seilern Triptych* [fig. 284], adoring Christ in the scene of the Entombment, may suggest the road of the actual pilgrimage to the Holy Land. However, it can also be interpreted as a plain metaphor of “the pilgrimage of life”: life as a pilgrimage to Christ, to the altar, and towards salvation through the sacramental life (the tomb symbolises here the altar of the Eucharistic). The figure is not dressed as a pilgrim, and not even as a traveller; their plain robes are typical for someone dressed for the outdoors..

The female donor on the side panel of the *Mérode Altarpiece* [fig. 330] holds a rosary with a figurine of St. Christopher attached to its string – which Botvinick (after Charles de Tolnay) took as a symbol of pilgrimage. However, St. Christopher is also the patron saint of common travellers, merchants, raftsmen, drifters, but also of knights, and above all the patron of a good death; finally, in the context of the neighbouring scene with the Annunciation, he becomes a symbol of salvation through the Incarnation and the Passion of Christ (St. Christopher carried the Incarnated Christ as a child, which put on the saint’s shoulders the burden of all the sins of mankind). The female figure was added subsequently, after the Master of Flémalle completed the triptych. It was probably painted by Rogier van der Weyden, who, in all likelihood, was responsible for the whole new left wing, and the window in the central panel was altered from a golden background to the open view of the sky, and the stained glass with its coat-of-arms in the upper section. The identity of the donors remains unclear. Felix Thürlemann (1997, 2002) suggested that the left hand coat-of-arms belonged to the Ymbrecht family (or Inghelbrecht), and identified the male donor

with Pieter Engelbrecht from Cologne (died 1476), who married in the city Margarete (Gretchen) Schrynmakers (Schrinmakers), and then abandoned her and their hometown (when implicated in a criminal trial for murder) and moved to Mechelen, where, under the surname of Inghelbrecht, he married (bigamously!) Heylwich Bille of Breda – she was supposed to be the newly portrayed figure on the side panel.⁵⁵⁵ According to Thürlemann, originally the triptych was commissioned to celebrate the marriage in Cologne, with the iconography of scenes relating to the family names of the first couple. *Enghelbrecht* – “angel brings [news, which means he announces]” – finds a visual onomastic allusion in the image of the Annunciation, while *Schrynmaker* – carpenter, shrine- and cabinet-maker – corresponds to the image of St. Joseph in his workshop. Following the move to Mechelen, c. 1449/1450, the patron supposedly had the triptych repainted: to add to his portrait the likeness of his new wife, and their coat-of-arms in the central panel, which confirmed the legal nature of their marriage. Everything sounds great, even fascinating; it would make for a wonderful story! However, there is no certainty that the coat-of-arms of the Inghelbrecht family should be linked with Pieter, and we cannot be certain that the female coat-of-arms belongs to Heylich Bille (we do not know her family’s crest). therefore, Thürlemann’s assertion loses its foundation and becomes merely a possible, but uncertain hypothesis.⁵⁵⁶ Whichever is true, the man from the *Mérode Triptych* includes no references to pilgrimage, or even to travelling; hanging from his belt are the writing tools that characterize him as a merchant and an official of the city council (Inghelbrecht only became a member of the city council in 1446, after the final completion of the triptych). Behind him, in the back, before the gate, stands a city envoy and a herald of Mechelen – a representative of the city government, identifiable by the crest on his pouch attached to the belt. There are no hints at pilgrimage or travelling. Moreover, the crests in the window confirm that the Annunciation takes place metaphorically, as a vision, in the house of the donor, which excludes the possibility that he travelled (spiritually or actually) to Nazareth or to a replica of the Holy House at one of the European towns (Walsingham, Loreto) where they stood.

555 F. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin. Das Mérode-Triptychon. Ein Hochzeitsbild für Peter Engelbrecht und Gretchen Schrinmechers aus Köln*, Frankfurt a.M.1997; his, F. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin: A Monographic Study...*, pp. 58–76, 269–272 (cat. no. I.12). More about the *Mérode Altarpiece* – see note 214.

556 Cf. the critique of Thürlemann’s arguments by Jochen Sander, in: Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, cat. no. 4, pp. 192–201 and B. Eclercy, “Von Mausfallen und Ofenschirmen. Zum Problem des ‘disguised symbolism’ bei den frühen Niederländern,” in: Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier...*, pp. 133–147.



Fig. 590: Rogier vander Weyden, *The Adoration Triptych* (*The Bladelin-Altarpiece*, *The Middelburg Altarpiece*), c. 1445, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie

In other Netherlandish paintings which show a patron in a sacred place (e.g. in triptychs by Rogier van der Weyden), there are no specific references to even a freely interpreted setting of the Holy Land. In the *Bladelin Altarpiece* (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie)⁵⁵⁷ [fig. 590], the patron – actually not necessarily Pieter Bladelin – experiences a vision of the Nativity in a manger near Bethlehem, inspired by the *Revelations* of St. Bridget of Sweden. However, in the background there is a very realistic depiction of a Netherlandish city (previously identified, though without solid basis, as Middelburg).⁵⁵⁸ Similarly – in the *Columba Altarpiece* from

557 *The Bladelin Altarpiece* (*The Middelburg Altarpiece*) by Rogier van der Weyden: De Vos Rogier 1999, pp. 108–110, 134, 157–158 and cat. no. 15 – with previous bibliography; Kemperdick Rogier 1999/2007, pp. 61–65; A.-F. Kollermann in: Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, cat. no. 33; L. Campbell, “The Workshop of Rogier van der Weyden,” in: Campbell, Van der Stock Rogier 2009, pp. 111–113; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 250–252. See also C. Harbison, *Visions and Meditations in Early Flemish Painting*, pp. 92–96, 101, 105; L.S. Dixon, “Portraits and Politics in Two Triptychs by Rogier van der Weyden,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 129, 1987, no. 109, pp. 181–190, especially pp. 186–188; A. Acres, *The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World*, pp. 428–429; B.L. Rothstein, “Vision, Cognition, and Self-Reflection in Rogier van der Weyden’s Bladelin Triptych,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 64, 2001, no. 1, pp. 37–55; H. Schlie, *Bilder des Corpus Christi...*, pp. 272–278; B.L. Rothstein, *Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting*, Cambridge 2005.

558 About the doubtful identification of the donor and the depicted city see A.-F. Kollermann in: Kemperdick, Sander *Flémalle/Rogier* 2008/2009, cat. no. 33.

Munich [fig. 551] the donor is included in the scene of the Adoration of the Magi, but the setting of the holy space is characterised as a local northern European landscape, one that is Netherlandish, without any references to the Holy Land.⁵⁵⁹ In the scene of the Presentation of Christ, Solomon's Temple is a Romanesque-Gothic church inspired by the architecture of Mosan and Cologne; in the Annunciation, the house of Anne and Mary in Nazareth is a representative chamber of a northern European interior, even if it is somewhat stylized; Bethlehem and Jerusalem in the central panel are in fact a great panorama of Northern cities, composed of realistic motifs unified into a generic whole. This approach is most typical for Netherlandish and German paintings. There are no specific topographical signs, symbolic buildings, churches and holy places from distant pilgrimage sites. Only small figures on roads and twisted paths in the background could be interpreted as pilgrims, but they walk in different directions, and seem to be local, northern European travellers, merchants, craftsmen or peasants.



Fig. 591: Geertgen tot Sint Jans, Diptych of the *Crucifixion with Sts. Jerome and Francis*, and *The Virgin Mary in Glory*; Edinburgh, The National Gallery of Scotland, NG 1253, and Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

559 For the *Columba Altarpiece* see note 503.

Equally problematic is Henry Luttikhuizen's interpretation of the *Crucifixion with St. Jerome, St. Francis and the Virgin in Glory* by Geertgen tot Sint Jans (Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland and Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) [fig. 591].⁵⁶⁰ The scholar believed that the diptych was a tool for spiritual pilgrimage. Indeed, in the scene of the Crucifixion, the background includes episodes from the Passion in architectural settings, but there is no indication that the meditation should be experienced as a spatial (spiritual) pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The view of the city – conceived rather as an outline than a panorama – forms a plain, abbreviated and non-specific topographical background for the events upon which the believer was to meditate: the Passion of Christ and the role of the Virgin in the act of Salvation, and her triumph over sin, depicted in the accompanying panel. The diptych is a rather typical object destined for private devotion (though unusual because of the iconographical type of the Virgin and Child).

560 H. H. Luttikhuizen, "Still walking: Spiritual pilgrimage, Early Dutch painting, and the dynamics of faith," in: *Push Me, Pull You...*, vol. I, pp. 199–226. On the **Edinburgh-Rotterdam Diptych by Geertgen tot Sint Jans**, especially the Rosary Virgin wing see also J. Snyder, "The Early Haarlem School of Painting, part II: Geertgen tot Sint Jans," *The Art Bulletin* 42, 1960, pp. 113–132; H. van Os, "Coronatio: glorificatio en Maria in Sole," *Bulletin / Museum Boymans-van Beuningen Rotterdam* 15, 1964, pp. 22–38; J.H.A. Engelbregt, "'Het glorievolle Rozenkransgeheim van Maria's kroning in de hemel' door Geertgen tot Sint Jans," in: *Album discipulorum aangeboden aan Professor Dr. J. G. Van Gelder*, Utrecht 1963, pp. 31–44; G.Th.M. Lemmens, "Geertgen tot Sint Jans 'Kruisiging met de Heilige Dominicus,'" *Oud Holland* 81, 1966, pp. 73–75; K.G. Boon, *Geertgen tot Sint Jans*, Amsterdam 1967; L. Wuyts, "De Madonna en [in] de stralenkrans van Geertgen tot Sint-Jans: een ikonologisch onderzoek," in: *Annalen XLIII^e congres van de Federatie van de kringen voor oudheidkunde en geschiedenis van België*, Sint-Niklaas 1974, pp. 348–357; O. Pächt, *Altniederländische Malerei. Von Rogier van der Weyden bis Gerard David*, ed. by M. Rosenauer, Munich 1994, pp. 211–226; [without author], "Nogmaals aandacht voor de Heilige Maagschap van Geertgen tot Sint Jans," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 51, 2003, no. 2 (special volume devoted to Geertgen), pp. 118–120; J.O. Hand, C.A. Metzger, R. Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits...*, cat. no. 11; F. Lammertse in: *Vroege Hollanders: schilderkunst van de late Middeleeuwen*, ed. by F. Lammertse, J. Giltaij, exh. cat., Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam 2008, pp. 76–81; J.R. Decker, *The Technology of Salvation and the Art of Geertgen tot Sint Jans: Manifestations of Soteriology in Material Culture*, Aldershot 2009; A. Ziembra, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 349–350; A. van der Kuijl, *Geertgen tot Sint Jans. Het mirakel van Haarlem*, Haarlem 2019, passim.

Large-scale paintings of the Road to Calvary or the Crucifixion and the related themes from the Passion, popular in the fifteenth and in the early sixteenth century, and presented as multifigured narratives with various scenes set in a vast landscape, could seemingly be related to the idea of the spiritual and mental pilgrimage to the Holy Land. However, this would not be an accurate interpretation of these works. Only rarely do they include elements from the actual topography of Jerusalem, and they generally substitute the city with views of a northern, local place. They offer a background for the events and are not intended to be traversed by the spiritual gaze of the pilgrim.



Fig. 592: Workshop of Jan van Eyck, *The Arrest of Christ*, illumination from the *Turin-Milan Hours*, previously Turin, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms K.IV.29, fol. 24r (destroyed in a fire in 1904, archival photo)

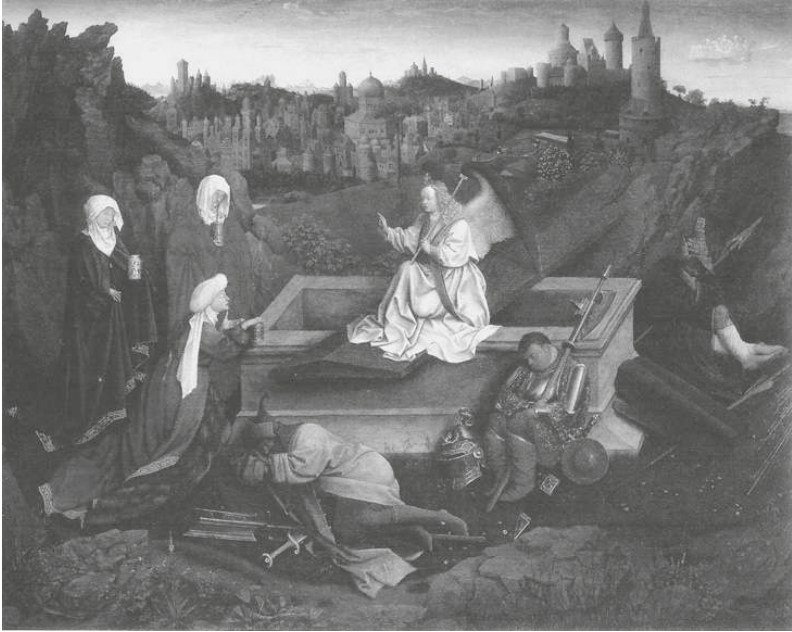


Fig. 593: Workshop of Jan van Eyck, *The Three Marys at the Tomb*, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

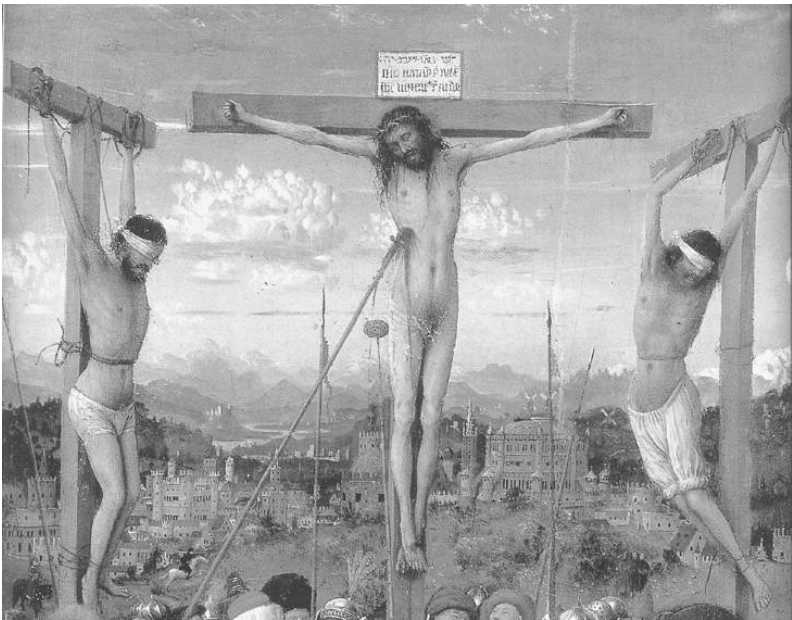


Fig. 594: Workshop of Jan van Eyck, *Diptych from New York (Diptych of the Crucifixion and of the Last Judgment)*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1933 (33.92ab) – detail of the left wing

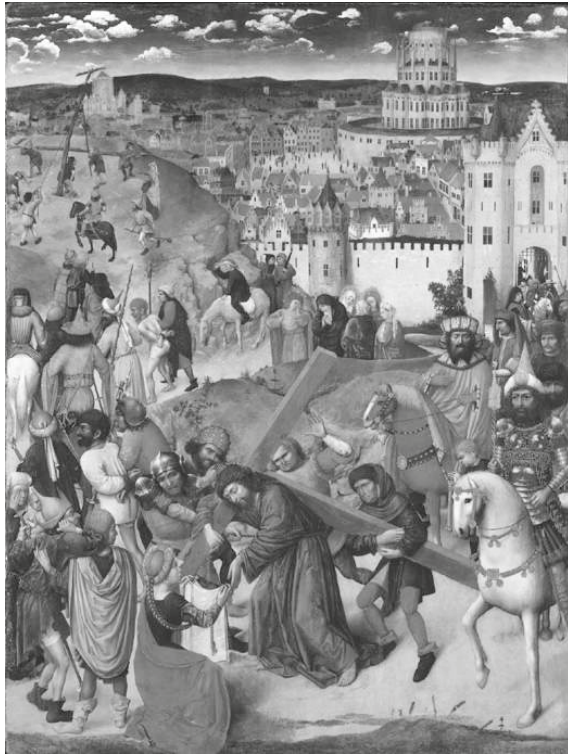


Fig. 595: Northern Netherlandish Master (Utrecht?), *Christ Carrying the Cross*, c. 1470, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest George D. Pratt, 1935 (35.43.95)

It was only Jan van Eyck's workshop, functioning in Bruges during the master's life and long after his death (1441), and which produced several panels and miniatures, that encouraged the viewer to imagine the space of Jerusalem and its surroundings as entirely fictional and fantastic. In the miniature *The Arrest of Christ* in the *Turin-Milan Hours* (fol. 24r, from the burned part of the codex) [fig. 592], attributed to Hand G and executed either by Jan van Eyck or by his workshop c. 1440–1445, the Garden of Gethsemane is located behind a deep valley, the Valley of Kidron (Josaphat). This divides it from Mount Sion and the Old Town, which has a great dome to represent the Temple, identifiable as an idealised Solomon's Temple. The same building, this time in the shape of the Mosque Kubbat as-Sakhra, The Dome of the Rock, appears in the centre of the panorama of the city in the painting by Van Eyck's workshop showing the *Three Marys at the Tomb* (Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) [fig. 593].⁵⁶¹ Here

561 N. van der Wal, F. Lammertse in: S. Kemperdick, F. Lammertse et al., *The Road to Van Eyck*, cat. no. 82 (with further bibliography).

the viewer admires the complex and hybrid urban planning on the hills, seen from the rocky Golgotha, and can discern in it the buildings of Sion on the left hand-side and the fortifications of the citadel and the Gate of David; further in the middle, behind the walls, are the Old Town with the Temple Mount, and finally on the right hand-side, behind the Josaphat Valley, is the Mount of Olives. But all these places are shown in a highly stylized way; one would have to be familiar with the sacred topography of Jerusalem to be able to identify these sites in the painting. The *Carrying of the Cross*, a copy of a lost original from Van Eyck's workshop (Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest), offers an imagined panorama of the holy city, with a giant rotunda to represent Solomon's Temple, that has an ambulatory towering over it – again a product of fantasy. This offers the faithful the possibility of employing their topographic imagination and knowledge of the spatial relations of sites in the Holy City.⁵⁶² A similar depiction of the city appears in the *New York Diptych* – again by Van Eyck's workshop – in the panel of the *Crucifixion* [fig. 594], in which one could identify Mount Moriah in the centre, with Solomon's Temple, or the Dome of the Rock, and the al-Aqsa Mosque; and on the left-hand side the buildings on Sion and the Tower (Citadel) of David – all conceived as fantastic Romanesque-Gothic structures. Finally, inspired by the works from Van Eyck's workshop, an anonymous Northern Netherlandish master c. 1470 in his *Carrying of the Cross* (Metropolitan Museum, New York, Bequest of George D. Pratt) [fig. 595],⁵⁶³ depicted Jerusalem partially as an exotic, Levantine city, and partially as a Northern town – with its regular, rectangular market before Solomon's Temple, but also with the fortress-citadel of David in the back, on the left-hand side. These images do not capture the historic space of Jerusalem, known from the pilgrims' accounts, but assist in journeys of gaze through the imagined sites of the Holy City and its surroundings.

Among the various large-scale images of the *Crucifixion* and the *Road to Calvary* painted in Germany, we will not find even attempts at a fantastic definition of the space of the Holy Land.⁵⁶⁴ In the monumental and multi-episode

562 F. Lammertse, in: S. Kemperdick, F. Lammertse et al., *The Road to Van Eyck...*, cat. no. 88 (with further bibliography).

563 M.W. Ainsworth in: M.W. Ainsworth, K. Christiansen et al., *From Van Eyck to Bruegel...*, cat. no. 8; M. Trowbridge, "Jerusalem transposed: A fifteenth-century panel for the Bruges market," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* (JHNA), 1/1, 2009 (electronic version: <http://www.jhna.org>).

564 **Representations of Jerusalem in German art** – see for instance R. Hausserr, "Spätgotische Ansichten der Stadt Jerusalem (oder: War der Hausbuchmeister in Jerusalem?)," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 29–30, 1987–1988, pp. 47–70. See also C.H. Krinsky, "Representations of the Temple of Jerusalem before 1500," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 33, 1970, pp. 1–19.

Tucher Votive Panel by Wolfgang Katzheimer and Master L.Cz. from the church of St. Sebald in Nuremberg (1485) [fig. 538]⁵⁶⁵ the setting is entirely local. In the distance is a panorama of Bamberg, depicted with great realism, with the cathedral in the lower section, the Benedictine monastery on the hill, and a great river on the right hand-side at the top – probably the Main river – is represented, which is inconsistent with to the Biblical account.⁵⁶⁶

A true exception among the German Passion paintings is the large panel of the *Lamentation* and the *Entombment* from the Tucherschlosschen in Nuremberg (a deposit of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum; 32 × 102.5cm), from the workshop of Wolfgang Katzheimer, created in 1483 or shortly before that date [fig. 596].⁵⁶⁷ It is an epitaph of Adelheid Tucher – maiden name Gundlach – a patrician lady from Nuremberg, and from 1446 the wife of Andreas Tucher, a member of the city council and the town's mayor. Perhaps the painting was originally displayed in the cloister of the church of St. James in Nuremberg, where Adelheid was allegedly buried in 1482. Nearly half of the painting is devoted to the panorama of Jerusalem, depicted on a golden background. The panorama-maps include the Via Doloris marked by the motif of a small figure of Christ carrying the cross, repeated each time with other characters corresponding to specific events: the tormentors, the Virgin, Simon of Cyrene *etc.* The foreground includes the buildings of Mount Moriah, the Dome of the Rock, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and in the background the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with its Anastasis rotunda and Golgotha chapel. From the circular opening in its dome a beam of light or smoke of an offering goes towards the sky (the painter was not certain about the location of its famous oculus, and depicted it both in the dome of the Rotunda of the Anastasis and in the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre). Further, on the left, behind the street-valley we see Sion. The architecture is unlike the widespread depictions of familiar, northern European structures, and clearly imitates the Levant buildings. The suggestion of the topography of the Eastern city does not stand in conflict with the unrealistic golden background, which serves to add to the view the quality of a relic: Jerusalem is in itself sacred, a place

565 R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, vol. I, pp. 81–87, 352–359, vol. II, cat. no. 49.

566 Cf. B. Schock-Werner, “Bamberg ist Jerusalem. Architekturporträt im Mittelalter,” in: *Der Traum vom Raum. Gemalte Architektur aus sieben Jahrhunderten*, exh. cat. Albrecht-Dürer-Gesellschaft – Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Nuremberg 1986, pp. 43–55.

567 Workshop of Wolfgang Katzheimer, *Epitaph of Adelheid Tucher-Gundlach in Nuremberg*: R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, vol. I, p. 348, vol. II, cat. no. 51 (with further bibliography).

that is also a relic. Undoubtedly, a detailed description from a pilgrim's account, or a map or a painted panorama that illustrated an itinerary, or a diary from the Holy Land, informed the view.⁵⁶⁸ The Tucher family made wide use of Hans Tucher's guidebook: a description of the journey to the Holy Land, to Sion and to Egypt undertaken in 1479, which was published six times between 1482 and 1486.⁵⁶⁹ Hans was Endres's brother and Adelheid's brother-in-law. His return to Nuremberg in 1480, shortly before the creation of Adelheid's epitaph, was an important event celebrated by the family and the city. Therefore, his guidebook was a source of the topographic view depicted in the painting, which undoubtedly served also as a tool for spiritual pilgrimage undertaken by Adelheid's descendants, and in particular women from the Tucher family, who would pray before this epitaph of their notable patrician ancestress.

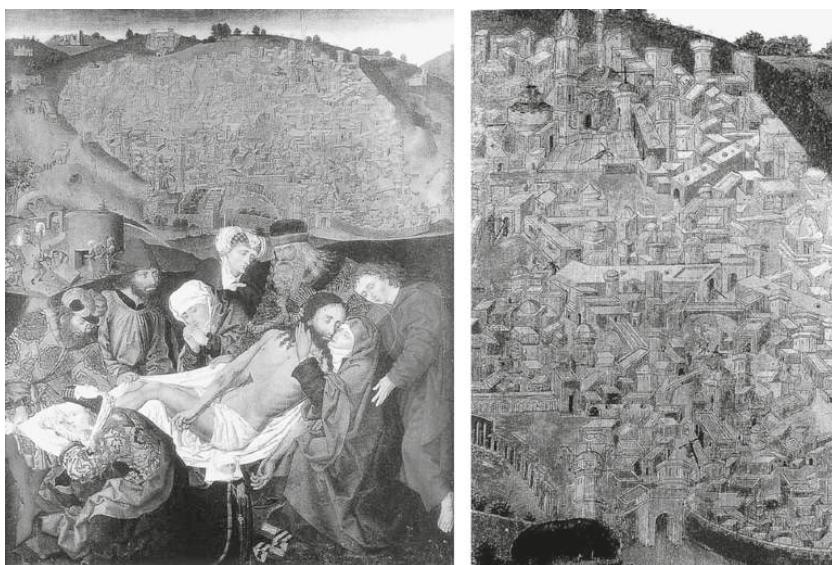


Fig. 596: Workshop of Wolfgang Katzheimer, *The Lamentation and the Entombment* from Tucherschlosschen in Nuremberg, 1483 or 1482, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, on long-term loan to the Museum Tucherschloss und Hirsvogelsaal – overall view and a detail with the view of Jerusalem

568 Reiner Hausscherr (*Spätgotische Ansichten...*, p. 63) argued that the map-panorama was based on the plan of Jerusalem from the codex Cod. icon. 172 in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich. Robert Suckale (*Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, note 1804) doubts this adaptation.

569 R. Herz, *Die 'Reise ins Gelobte Land' Hans Tuchers des Älteren 1479–1480. Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung und kritische Edition eines spätmittelalterlichen Reiseberichts*, Wiesbaden 2002.

Scholars also rightly include in the category of pilgrim images the *Shrine of St. Ursula* – a famous work by Hans Memling painted in 1489 for the Hospital of St. John in Bruges (Sint-Janshospitaal – Memlingmuseum) [fig. 34]. It was probably commissioned by two mothers superior, Jossine van Dudzele and Anne van den Moortele, to commemorate the translation of the saint's remains on 21st October 1489 from their old reliquary to the new chest.⁵⁷⁰ The painter depicted the story of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins in episodes in six arcades; on one side are the Arrival of St. Ursula and her companions at Cologne, The Arrival at Basel, The Arrival at Rome, and on the other the Departure from Basel, the Martyrdom of the Virgins and the Martyrdom of St. Ursula. Each field depicts a separate scene, but the narrative is continuous and unified by the landscape in the back: a fragment of sky and an undulating row of stone architecture to represent the cities with their characteristic buildings and churches. The three views of Cologne with the choir and the tower of the cathedral, and the tower of Great St. Martin Church, are depicted with such great realism that scholars believed that Memling travelled to these places for this specific commission.⁵⁷¹

570 *The Shrine of St. Ursula* by Hans Memling: J. Nuechterlein, "Hans Memling's St. Ursula Shrine: The Subject as Object of Pilgrimage," in: *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, ed. by S. Blick, R. Tekippe, Leiden–Boston 2005, chapter 3; Lane Memling 2009, chapter 8.IV and cat. no. 13;. See also: V.J. Hull, *Hans Memling's Painting for the Hospital of Saint John in Bruges*, New York 1981; H. Lobelle-Caluwé, *Memlingmuseum, Bruges, Saint John's Hospital*, Bruges 1985, pp. 67–79; her, "Het Ursulaschrijn van Hans Memling," *Stedelijke Musea. Stad Bruges. Jaarboek 1991–1992*, pp. 253–269; D. Martens, "Observations sur la Châsse de sainte Ursule de Hans Memling: sa structure, ses commanditaires et ses sources," *Annales d'histoire de l'art et d'archéologie* 16, 1994, pp. 79–98; De Vos Memling 1994, cat. no. 83; H. Lobelle-Caluwé, "Het Ursulaschrijn van Hans Memling. Ontwerp, constructie en oorspronkelijk uitzicht," in: *Hans Memling: Essays*, pp. 89–100; W. Coleman, *Empathetic Constructions in Early Netherlandish Painting: Narrative and Reception in the Art of Hans Memling*, dissertation University of Texas, Austin 2003, pp. 143–177; V.J. Hull, "Spiritual pilgrimage in the paintings of Hans Memling," in: *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, ed. by S. Blick, R. Tekippe, Leiden–Boston 2005, chapter 2; S.B. Montgomery, *St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne, Relics, Reliquaries and the Visual Culture of Group Sanctity in Late Medieval Europe*, Bern 2009; A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, pp. 568–569; D. Martens, "Le rayonnement de la Châsse de sainte Ursule hors de Bruges, de Carel Van Mander (1604) à Guillaume Geefs (1847)," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 77, 2014, no. 2, pp. 221–240.

571 De Vos Memling 1994, no. 83; T.-H. Borchert, "Memling – leven en werk," in: T.-H. Borchert et al., *De portretten van Memling*, p. 38; Lane Memling 2009, chapter 2.

The history from the *Golden Legend* describes the story of Ursula, the beautiful young daughter of a Christian king from Britain, who, in order to avoid marriage to the pagan king of Armorica, gave him a series of challenging tasks to fulfil. He had to convert to Christianity and let his future wife go on a pilgrimage to Rome, accompanied by a group of virgins who were also new converts. The saint spent three years in Rome, visiting holy sites. Her story is depicted in the reliquary from Bruges. Through the simultaneous capturing of the scenes the representation conveys a sense of movement and of a long journey. The pilgrimage starts in Cologne, and continues through the Alps to Basel, and then to Rome, where the saint and her companions are welcomed by Pope Ciriac. Then follows the depiction of their return: via Basel, accompanied by the Pope, to Cologne, where the virgins and the saint suffer death at the hands of the pagan Huns. As the viewer-believer participated in the journey in his mind, he/she reenacted the narrative, walking around the shrine. The object encouraged movement and inspired the faithful to join the saint in her pilgrimage. If this devotion was enacted on the feast of St. Ursula, the devotee was granted a forty-day indulgence.

Originally the shrine was placed with the longer side parallel to the altarpiece of the hospital church – namely the *St. John Altarpiece* by Memling (1479) [fig. 118], with the Virgin and Child and saints in the central panel. In this way, the faithful followed the path of St. Ursula, defined here as mental pilgrimage to the Virgin and Christ, via the road of the metaphorical and spiritual imitation of Christ and the Virgin, towards personal salvation. The arrangement linked the pious journey of St. Ursula (and the imaginary pilgrimage of the faithful, who followed in her footsteps) with the cults of Christ and the Virgin, and of St. John the Baptist and the Evangelist, the patrons of the church and of the hospital. It also linked the journey of St. Ursula with the holy virgins represented in the altarpiece by St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Barbara.

The Shrine of St. Ursula also established a connection between Bruges and Cologne, the place of the pilgrims' cult of the Three Magi, whose frequently venerated relics were displayed in the Cathedral, and who were identified as the patrons of pilgrimage. In this way, by association, Bruges and its hospital church belonged to the network of pilgrims' routes between Cologne, Rome and the Holy Land. The first two destinations are depicted in the panels of the reliquary by Memling, and the third is in the background of the *St. John Altarpiece* (the palace of Herod Agrippa in Jerusalem is shown as the place of St. John the Baptist's martyrdom).

Despite all these hints and the possible meanings related to the pilgrimage, the *Shrine of St. Ursula* does not demonstrate any direct references to the literature of contemporary pilgrim. There are no references to pilgrimages to the remains of St. Ursula, for instance to her church in Cologne, nor any elements drawn from guidebooks to pilgrimage sites in Rome (of its seven main

churches, with important relics of Christ, the Virgin, the Apostles and the first saints). The pilgrims' cult of St. Ursula in Cologne is not conceived as a substitute for the main pilgrimages, in the way that visiting the major basilicas in Rome worked as a substitute for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, guaranteeing the same indulgences to pilgrims. This is why only a partial indulgence was assigned to the relics of St. Ursula in Bruges, and only for forty days.

VI.8. Paintings as panoramas of pilgrimage sites

Meditation, prayer, and contemplation directed to holy places through the agency of the painted image, and the replacing of actual pilgrimage to distant lands on site in the Netherlands, Germany and other regions, could only have been truly fulfilled by one type of painterly work (though as we will see, with various reservations). These were painting-panoramas of the places in the Holy Land showing the Passion of Christ or the Life of the Virgin. The *Turin Passion* and the *Seven Joys of the Virgin* by Memling (Turin, Galleria Sabauda and Munich, Alte Pinakothek), and anonymous panels with scenes of the Passion (Lisbon, Museu Nacional do Azulejo; Pont-Saint-Ésprit, Musée d'Art Sacré du Gard; Leuven, M-Museum; Toruń/Thorn, Church of St. James),⁵⁷²

572 **Panoramas of the Holy Land with scenes from the Passion or the Life of the Virgin:** M. Smeyers, "Analecta Memlingiana: From Hemling to Memling – from panoramic view to compartmented representation," in: *Memling Studies*, pp. 179–184; K.M. Rudy, *Northern European Visual Responses to Holy Land Pilgrimage, 1453–1550*, Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, New York 2001; V.J. Hull, *Spiritual pilgrimage in the paintings of Hans Memling*; J. Nuechterlein, *Hans Memling's St. Ursula Shrine...*; M. Kirkland-Ives, *Narrative Performance and Devotional Experience in the Art of Hans Memling*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara 2005; K. Kopania, *Duchowa pielgrzymka po Jerozolimie...*; Lane Memling 2009, chapter 8: *Paintings as Aids to Spiritual Pilgrimage*, pp. 129–173; J. Gerth, *Wirklichkeit und Wahrnehmung. Hans Memlings Turiner Passion und die Bildgruppe der Passionspanoramen*, Berlin 2010; T. Urban, "Vom Nacheinander und Aufeinander der Bilderzählung. Die Erinnerungsräume der Turiner Passion," in: *Techniken des Bildes*, ed. by M. Schulz, B. Wyss, Munich 2010, pp. 127–143; K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, pp. 151–170; H. Schlie, "Das Mnemotop Jerusalem in der Prozession, in Brügge und im Bild. Die Turiner Passion von Hans Memling und ihre medialen Räume," in: *Medialität der Prozession. Performanz ritueller Bewegung in Texten und Bildern der Vormoderne / Médialité de la procession. Performance du mouvement rituel en textes et en images à l'époque pré-moderne*, ed. by K. Gvozdeva, H.R. Velten, Heidelberg 2011, pp. 141–175; M. Kirkland-Ives, *In the Footsteps of Christ: Hans Memling's Passion Narratives and the Devotional Imagination in the Early Modern Netherlands*, Turnhout 2013; I. Falque, *Devotional Portraiture and Spiritual Experience in Early Netherlandish Painting*, Leiden – Boston 2019, vol. I (text), pp. 92–95, vol. II (catalogue), cat. nos. 102, 121, 423, 561, 562.

as well as book illuminations⁵⁷³ and woodcuts, like the originally monumental xylograph from Paris of c. 1460 (120 × 112cm, now preserved in a fragmentary state),⁵⁷⁴ or another woodcut published in Paris towards the end of the fifteenth century,⁵⁷⁵ [figs. 597–604] and tapestries (*The Journey of Ottheinrich, Count of Palatinate, to Jerusalem in 1521*, designed and executed by a Brussels workshop in 1541, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum)⁵⁷⁶ could all act as visual aids in spiritual, mental pilgrimage.

Panoramas of the Holy Land with scenes from the Passion and the Life of the Virgin share certain characteristics with pilgrims' accounts and itineraries, but they also include serious discrepancies with regards to certain points of apparent common knowledge. For instance, the Crucifixion takes place on Golgotha, as it should, but the Entombment is located on a different mount or on its side, separated from Golgotha by a valley or on an unidentified flat piece of land (*The Passion from Turin* by Memling, the woodcut from Paris c. 1500; the Passion painting from Toruń). The author of the *Passion* from Lisbon knew about the famous oculus in the dome of the Anastasis by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but the opening is depicted incorrectly in the Tower of David by the citadel. The panoramas include episodes that take place in locations that did not belong to a standard pilgrim route and were not included in pilgrims' accounts, such as the Descent into Limbo. Mount Sion, the site of many events that were important for the Passion, is always incorrectly located within the Old Town walls. These numerous inconsistencies are related to the freedom of their composition. They were not strict illustrations of the pilgrims' guidebooks and accounts, and the depicted architecture and setting were not directly based on similar texts. Moreover, the composition of the paintings combines two conventions: on the one hand the imaginary description of the topography, inspired by the general account from the pilgrim literature and

573 W. Cahn, "Margaret of York's Guide to Pilgrimage to Churches of Rome," in: *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion and the Visions of Tondal*, ed. by Th. Kren, exh. cat., J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu 1992, pp. 80–98; L. Gelfand, "Bruges as Jerusalem, Jerusalem as Bruges: Actual and imagined pilgrimage in fifteenth-century manuscript illuminations and paintings," *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie* 29, 2007, pp. 7–24.

574 A. Jammes, H.D. Saffrey, "Une image xylographique inconnue de la Passion de Jésus à Jerusalem," in: H.D. Saffrey, *Humanisme et imagerie aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, Paris 2003, pp. 157–175; K. Kopania, *Duchowa wędrówka po Jerozolimie...*, pp. 106–107.

575 J. Białostocki, *Spätmittelalter und beginnende Neuzeit*, (Propyläen-Kunstgeschichte 7), Berlin 1972, no. 183.

576 K. Kopania, *Duchowa wędrówka po Jerozolimie...*, p. 106; F. Reichert, *Die Reise des Pfalzgrafen Ottheinrich zum Heiligen Land 1521*, Regensburg 2005.

guidebooks to the Holy Land, on the other the chronological narrative of the episodes from the Gospel, based on common iconographic tradition and texts from the Bible, the apocrypha and legends. Consequently, the blending of the two modes – the topographic imagination and the historic narration – results in neither of them being fully consistent. Their ultimate goal is mnemonic: establishing a space, not necessarily realistic and strictly topographic, but one that allows viewers to remember the events through their location in the fictive territory, setting or a specific spatial sequence. In this sense, they are “spaces of memory:” mnemonic edifices and theatres from the field of the “art of memory.”⁵⁷⁷



Fig. 597: Westphalian workshop (active in Thorn/Toruń?), *Passion Panorama*, c. 1480–1490, Toruń, church of St. Jacob

⁵⁷⁷ About the links between memory, spatial imagination and art in the Middle Ages: M.J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge–New York 1990; L. Andrews, “Ordering space in Renaissance times: Position and meaning in continuous narration,” *Word & Image* 10, 1994, no. 1, pp. 84–94; his, *Story and space in Renaissance art: The rebirth of continuous narrative*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge–New York 1995; G. Confurius, “Die Innenarchitektur der Gedächtniskunst,” *Daidalos* 58, 1995, pp. 44–51; M.J. Carruthers, *The Craft of*

The *Passion from Toruń*, preserved in the church of St. James [fig. 597], is probably a work of the Westphalian workshop active in Toruń around 1480–1490.⁵⁷⁸ Kneeling in prayer, the donor is portrayed in the centre, close to the lower edge of the painting. The man is an unidentified Dominican friar, which allows us to hypothesize that the panel was commissioned for the destroyed Dominican church of St. Nicholas in Toruń. The figure was added, probably still during the original final phase of the painting process: under the layer of paint covering his garments are traces of the wall in the back, and originally this section included trees, such as those visible on the side, but their outlines are discernible *around* the figure of the friar. Another Dominican friar, in a white habit with black cappa and capuce, appears in one of the episodes on the left edge of the composition. The large panel (221 × 270cm) is an attempt to distribute in the space a sequence of episodes, starting with the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem and the Descent into Limbo. The latter does not belong to the category of the holy events and places venerated during a pilgrimage to the Holy City; it is not a part of the typical pilgrimage sequence.

The story begins on the left hand-side and unfolds towards the right edge of the composition. The building of gold to the left attracts the viewer's attention and encourages them to start looking at the image beginning from this point. It is the Golden Gate, through which Christ entered the city on an ass. Behind it is a domed rotunda with an oculus, which is not however the rotunda of the Anastasis of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; it must therefore be (this would be logical when it comes to the location) a simplified Solomon's Temple or Dome of the Rock, reduced in scale. Looking further

Thought: Meditation, rhetoric, and the making of images, 400–1200, Cambridge 1998; P. Parshall, "The art of memory and the Passion," *The Art Bulletin* 81, 1999, pp. 456–472; M.J. Carruthers, "Mental images, memory storage, and composition in the High Middle Ages," *Mittelalter* 13, 2008, no. 1, pp. 63–79; her, "Thinking in images: The spatial and visual requirements of cognition and recollection in medieval psychology," in: *Signs and symbols*, ed. by J. Cherry, A. Payne Donington 2009, pp. 1–17.

- 578 *The Passion Panorama from Toruń*: J. Domasłowski in: *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce*, vol. II, pp. 269–270 (with further bibliography); K. Kopania, *Duchowa pielgrzymka po Jerozolimie...*, (there in note nos. 2–4 critical account of previous bibliography). The painting was recently briefly discussed in: *Europa Jagellonica: Art and culture in Central Europe under the Jagiellonian Dynasty 1386–1572: exhibition guide / Europa Jagellonica. Kunst und Kultur Mitteleuropas unter der Herrschaft der Jagiellonen 1386–1572, Ausstellungsführer*, ed. by J. Fajt, M. Hörsch et al., Galerie Středočeského Kraje, Kutná Hora – Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie and Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, Warsaw – Haus der Brandenburgisch-Preußischen Geschichte, Potsdam, 2012–2013, cat. no. II.31.

towards the background of the composition, there are prominent fortifications: the Tower of David and the Citadel, the walls of which have large crenellations that encompass a sizeable fragment of the city, towards the space where the Risen Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene (although this place was venerated within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on Golgotha, the itineraries describe how Christ's appearance to the three Marys took place by or before the Tower of David). From the Golden Gate to the Dome of the Rock stretches the territory of Sion, forming a slightly uneven horizontal line. The main scene is the Last Supper in the Cenacle, within the monastery of the Franciscans. To the territory of Sion also belong the neighbouring buildings: the House of Caiaphas and Annas with the two scenes of Christ trials. Annas is portrayed as a bishop – typical for the pilgrims' accounts and guidebooks of the Holy Land, which describe the church of the Angels as the place of the house of the "bishop" Annas, and the Church of the Saviour as the place of the house of the "bishop" Caiaphas;⁵⁷⁹ however, Caiaphas is portrayed as an elderly lay judge. Further episodes that took place on Sion continue to the right, more or less in the centre of the painting. In the garden setting, we see the scene of the *Noli me Tangere*, and below it the episode of Christ challenging Doubting Thomas.

The second realm of Jerusalem topography – the Old Town – begins with the Golden Gate and the Dome of the Rock and spreads below in a line to the right, leading towards Golgotha. By the Golden Gate, in Herod's Palace, we see the interrogation of Christ, and, at the bottom the Praetorium – the Palace of Pilate in which he washes his hands of the guilt of condemning Christ. They are divided by pavilions with the scenes of the Passion: the Flagellation and the Crowning with Thorns. The beginning of the Passion, depicted before the houses of Herod and Pilate, is contrasted (on the left hand-side) by the scene of the Suicide of Judas with the devil tearing his soul out of the body; Judas hangs on a tree somewhere outside the city walls – in the pilgrimage literature this site is located in an entirely different place, on Sion. The painter decided to link the scene with the first episode of the Passion. Again, this shows that the story was more important to him than topography. To the right from the Houses of Pilate and Herod lies the Via Crucis, initially within the realm of the Old Town. This reflects nearly accurately the actual topography: both houses – of Herod and Pilate – belong to the pilgrimage route of the *Via Doloris*. Through three arched gates, of which one has to be the Ecce Homo Arch and the final the Lions' Gate (also known as the Sheep Gate, and St. Stephen's Gate), we see a crowded

579 See for instance a manuscript from Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, ms. 982 – K. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent ...*, appendix II, p. 290.

procession of protagonists and witnesses of Christ's Carrying of the Cross. Before the gate leading out of the city we see the scene with St. Veronica, and behind the gate the encounter with Simon of Cyrene, who helped Christ carry His cross. After this, the narrative leads diagonally up the road to Golgotha. We see two thieves and their tormentors and Roman soldiers; before them walk the members of the Sanhedrin, the priests and pharisees with their servants, one of which carries a ladder and the other of which blows a trumpet to announce the events; the third, on a horse, leads the procession.

The viewer's gaze reaches Golgotha, shown in the upper right hand section of the composition. The crowded Calvary includes the scene of the Crucifixion and to the left the swooning Virgin surrounded by the Three Marys and St. John the Evangelist. This section should have included the scenes of the Entombment and the Resurrection, shown below, clearly divided from Golgotha by the road in the valley. This division might have been informed by the characteristic duality of the Church of Holy Sepulchre as described in itineraries and guidebooks, which combined in its interior the Anastasis rotunda (the site of the Entombment and of the Resurrection of Christ) and the Passion within the sanctuary of Golgotha by the Church. Only someone who had visited Jerusalem would have understood that the distance between these *loca sacra* is not great; however those who based their understanding on written accounts could have had an impression of great spatial distance.

The upper section could also be read along a horizontal line, from the left edge to the right, in which case the initial element became the Mount of Olives. The painter depicted the Agony in the Garden, the Sleeping Apostles, the Arrest of Christ, and the Ascension, all of which took place at the top of the hill, following the biblical narrative and the iconographic tradition of Passion cycles. There we see footprints of Christ, a holy relic painted in a prominent way, which reflect the common iconography of the Ascension. In reality, as also described by the pilgrims' literature, the Mount of Olives is divided from the city, from Mount Moriah, by the Josephat Valley. In the painting from Toruń, the road in the valley divides the area of the hills from the city, but from the side of the Tower of David and subsequent fortifications, and not from the Mount of the Temple. Moreover, it is the same valley and the road that divide Golgotha. This striking divergence from the actual topography and the pilgrims' guidebooks results from the fact that the painter did not aim to illustrate the journey or the itinerary, even if he had a text of this kind at his disposal; he could easily base his depiction on the description of a third person. The inconsistency results primarily from the need to develop the narrative according to traditional Passion iconography. The key objective is the description of the events; their spatial

distribution is a useful undertaking that appeals to the imagination but is of secondary importance.

The sacred space of the Mount of Olives included important buildings: the sanctuary of St. Pelagia (the house with the figure of a woman towards the left edge of the composition?), the church of St. James the Less (one of the buildings on the left), the church of the Apostles (the Basilica of the Saviour) – here probably depicted at the top of the hill above the scene of the Arrest of Christ; further on, the church of the Ascension and the chapel of the Tomb of the Virgin – perhaps the two buildings at the top of the rocky hill, between the Golgotha and the Mount of Olives – without clear identifying elements. The painter did not draw from the pilgrims' literature describing this kind of place marked by specific buildings. Spread in the landscape, these structures are imaginative ornamental motifs, and not indications of specific sanctuaries.

The entire territory on the right-hand side, with the Road to Calvary, is spatially unclear. The section includes three scenes: the Apparition to the Apostles, the Road to Emmaus and the Descent into Limbo. As mentioned before, the third event does not belong to the standard pilgrims' sequence. Christ appeared to the Apostles three times, each in a different place. According to the pilgrim accounts and guidebooks, the apparition that took place on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35) occurred on Sion. The other, in which Christ gave the Great Commission, as described by St. Matthew (28:16–20) is typically located in "Galilee," a place on the Mount of Olives, through the identification with the mount in the actual Galilee, mentioned by Matthew (28:16); perhaps the pilgrims were shown to that direction in Galilee from the top of the Mount of Olives. The third apparition to the disciples, the Miraculous Catch of Fish (John 21:1–14, which, unlike the Gospel of St. Luke 5:1–11, postpones this episode to the time after the Resurrection), took place at the Sea of Galilee, to the north of the Holy Land, and thus far outside the territory of Jerusalem. The author of the painting from Toruń is uncertain about the selection of one specific moment and has merged various episodes. The Risen Christ appears before ten Apostles (during the meeting in Galilee there were eleven disciples), but the event takes place by water, near a lake with a fisherman's boat, which perhaps alludes to the miraculous catch of fish. Is the territory the Mount of Olives, or a site far beyond Jerusalem in Tiberias? Or is it Mount Sion? To this final location points the scene below, towards the lower edge of the painting: Christ is meeting His disciples on the Road to Emmaus. The three figures are portrayed as pilgrims in typical clothes with characteristic pilgrim staffs. The figure robed in dark garments originally had a cruciform halo, of which traces are visible on the sides of the pilgrim

hat. The painter disguised Christ following the words of the Gospel, to highlight the element of surprise when Christ revealed himself to the Apostles. However, the disguise conceals the meaning of the historic event and this section appears to be a genre scene. The role of the three empty scrolls above the figures remains unclear. Were they intended to be filled imaginatively with the viewer's own name or a personal text, if the figures define any potential viewer as a pilgrim on a spiritual journey, and therefore allow us to identify – *conformitas* – with Christ and the Disciples whilst journeying in the Holy Land? The three scenes in this part of the composition, seen together, created and continue to create a challenge to the accurate identification of the space. The depicted setting is far from any topographic accuracy and denies the faithful illustration of the pilgrims' accounts.

It would be possible to link the Passion depicted in the painting from Toruń with pilgrim literature only in terms of the image being formed by an imagination that had encountered pilgrim texts, but not as a strict illustration thereof. The painting includes the biblical narrative in the imagined space, locating the events in a large, common territory, divided into units: holy buildings, streets, cul-de-sacs, and "holy districts": The Mount of Sion, the Mount of Olives, the Temple district, the space of the Road to Calvary, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old Town, and Golgotha. It stimulates the mind of the faithful to follow the episodes from the life of Christ in a generalised setting, which only very roughly reflects the real topography (or rather the literary topography). To create a realistic impression of the setting the painter included genre scenes and figures. The lower part of the painting shows Christ and the Apostles on the Road to Emmaus transformed into three pilgrims. Above, on the right-hand side, a woman is gardening, and a shepherd's dog is barking at a cow. In the top left two women stand on their doorsteps, a peasant ploughs with two oxen and a Dominican friar enters a chapel or a church.

This "reality" must have spoken strongly to the viewers, since at a certain point someone – clearly motivated by a strong urge of personal vengeance against the evildoers – scratched the faces of Satan by the figure of Judas and violently covered the faces of some of the tormentors in the Trial of Pilate, the Flagellation and the Crowning with thorns.⁵⁸⁰ Such behaviour was not an isolated instance; we saw a similar approach to the representation of these same personages in miniatures from the manuscript at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris (ms 212).

580 I am grateful to Kamil Kopania for drawing my attention to these elements.



Fig. 598: Hans Memling, *The Turin Passion*, c. 1471–1472, Turin, Galleria Sabauda

The *Passion from Turin* by Hans Memling in its structure is similar to the Panorama in Toruń (Turin, Galleria Sabauda) [figs. 598–600].⁵⁸¹ It was painted c. 1471–1472 for Tommaso Portinari and his wife, Maria Maddalena Baroncelli, Italian residents in Bruges, whose portraits are included in the lower corners of the composition. According to Vasari, the painting was commissioned for Santa Maria Nuova in Florence. However, scholars have suggested other original locations: Dirk de Vos has proposed the Portinari chapel in the church of St. James in Bruges (where it would remain until 1500–1510, before subsequently being moved to Florence). Alternatively, Paula Nuttall has advanced the church of the Franciscan Osservanza in Bruges as its original setting (from which it would be moved to Italy, after the

581 *The Turin Passion* by Hans Memling: V.J. Hull, *Spiritual pilgrimage in the paintings of Hans Memling*; M. Kirkland-Ives, *Narrative Performance and Devotional Experience in the Art of Hans Memling*, pp. 1–19, 118–120, 231–233, 242–253; J. Bogers, in: *Firenze e gli antichi Paesi Bassi 1430–1530...*, cat. no. 23; Lane Memling 2009, chapter 8: *Paintings as Aids to Spiritual Pilgrimage*, pp. 129–173 and cat. no. 8; J. Gerth, *Wirklichkeit und Wahrnehmung...*; T. Urban, *Vom Nacheinander und Aufeinander der Bilderzählung*; M. Kirkland-Ives, *In the Footsteps of Christ: Hans Memling's Passion Narratives...*; A. Ziemia, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów...*, vol. II, p. 552; T-H. Borchert et al., *Memling. Rinascimento fiammingo*, exh. cat., Scuderie del Quirinale, Roma 2014, cat. no. 9.

relocation of the church in 1518).⁵⁸² The painting is slightly smaller than other panoramas of the Passion, measuring 54.9 x 90.1cm (the dimensions of the panel are 56.7 x 92.2cm). Memling focused primarily on the narrative of the biblical episodes, and similarly to the Passion from Toruń, topographic accuracy is of secondary importance. The painting depicts twenty-three episodes from the Gospels, starting with the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem (top left) to the Apparition of Christ to the Apostles at the Sea of Galilee (in the background, top right). The distribution of the scenes in the space is defined by the city with its walls, which seem to be inscribed in a diamond shape or trapezoid rectangle, more or less as it is in reality. The city rests in the centre of the composition, surrounded by fields and hills with fragments of the narrative.

The narrative can be followed according to biblical chronology, whilst at the same time respecting territorial and topographic divisions (though at times the route of such a pilgrimage includes spatial and temporal leaps). Christ enters Jerusalem at the top, on the left-hand side, where we see the towers of the Citadel and the Tower of David, stylised, like all the architecture in the painting, to look medieval. Further, on the right, is the scene of the Cleansing of the Temple, characterised as a gigantic building with towers in the form of a rotunda, or a polygonal building with a domed portico. Then there is a chronological leap – to the scene of Judas's Betrayal, accepting money from the archpriest's servant. This takes place on Sion. Here, as expected, the Last Supper takes place in the Cenacle. The church behind it is an imaginary construction, perhaps a reference to the sanctuary of the Dormition of the Virgin or the New Church of the Theotokos (Nea), but its identification is irrelevant for the Passion narrative of the painting. Subsequently, the gaze of the viewer goes beyond the city walls. In the bottom left corner, the territory of the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane stretches diagonally, with the scene of the Agony in the Garden, the Sleeping Apostles, the Arrest of Christ, and St. Peter slashing off the ear of Malchus. Now the viewer has to go back to the city through the same gate in the city walls through which the soldiers came to arrest Christ. Similarly, there is the scene of St. Peter's triple Denial of Christ on Sion, depicted before a church, San Pietro in Gallicantu (hence the cock in the window of the facade, flanked by the statues of Adam and Eve in niches; pilgrims' accounts describe a hole or a niche in the wall with the crowing cock, and this scene is depicted by Memling). The painter omits other places on Sion important to the Passion: the Houses of Annas and Caiaphas (only in the subsequent scene of Christ before Pilate do we see him in contemporary robes of the high priest, and a priest in monastic clothes).

582 De Vos *Memling* 1994, no. 11 and p. 109; D. De Vos, *Hans Memling*, exh. cat. 1994, cat. no. 4; P. Nuttall, *From Flanders to Florence...*, p. 64.

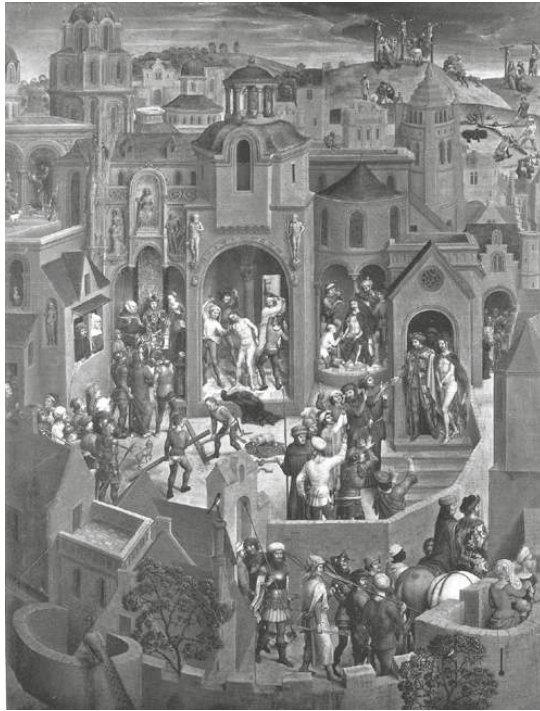


Fig. 599: Hans Memling, *The Turin Passion* – detail



Fig. 600: Hans Memling, *The Turin Passion* – detail

Now we proceed to the centre of the depicted space. The centre of the city (within the Old Town of Jerusalem) includes a large complex of monumental buildings, the Palace of Pilate, accurately located close to the Road to Calvary (which leads behind the internal wall). All the elements create a sequence of open loggias to highlight the continuous narrative: the Trial before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns, the Ecce Homo. Slightly towards the back there is another pavilion with an earlier scene. Scholars believed that it could be the second Trial before Pilate (Luke 23:13–16), or the Release of Barabbas, but it seems that it is the episode of the Trial before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:6–12). In this way, we would have had two *loca sacra* important for the pilgrimage: Pilate's House (the Praetorium) and the House (the palace) of Herod. The first is richly decorated with statues. Above the left pavilion-loggia, Memling depicted the Judgment of Solomon divided into three fields (as a reference to the original recognition of Christ's innocence, or, less likely, as an illustration to the final, unjust sentence given by Pilate, formulated in the scene of the Ecce Homo). Above the arcade with the Flagellation there are figures of nude men, two Old Testament warriors: Samson with lion's jaw as a club and Joshua or David with a bow and arrows – portrayed as antique or early Italian Renaissance nudes. These two Italianate motifs in the very centre of the painting are emblematic of the "Italian taste" promoted by Memling in his paintings as a result of his interaction with Italian clients in Bruges. On the flat roof of the building behind there is a monkey – an exotic feature, to highlight the Levantine scenery, and a traditional symbol of sin and carnal temptation (and in particular, *Luxuria*).

After this, we return towards the lower section, to the *piazza* before the Palace of Pilate, where the tormentors prepare the beams of the cross in preparation for the Road to Calvary. Through the prominent gate – we know it is the Lions' Gate – the cavalcade with the high priest and Pilate enters the road outside the city, where Christ falls under the cross, after which Simon of Cyrene helps him carry it. At the front of the procession there are two thieves. Behind the city walls the crowd heads towards Golgotha, depicted in the background. There we see further episodes: the Nailing to the Cross, the Crucifixion, and the Descent from the Cross, with soldiers arguing over Christ's garments between the first and the last of these scenes.

Now the viewer is invited downwards. On the right hand-side of the composition there is the Entombment (which includes only Joseph of Arimathea and St. Nicodemus) and the Resurrection, and above it the scene of *Noli me tangere*. In this way, the site of the Holy Sepulchre was again – as in all other Panoramas of the Passion – separated and spatially secluded from Golgotha. At the side of the separate hill there is an opening among the rocks – the place of the Descent into Limbo. A distant view at the top to the

right, which directs the gaze far beyond the city, includes two further scenes with small figures – these are the two apparitions that follow the meeting of the Risen Christ with Mary Magdalene. We see tiny figures of Christ and the Apostles on the road to Emmaus, and, almost at the horizon, Christ with his disciples at the Sea of Galilee.

The seven places depicted by Memling – the place of the Arrest of Christ, Peter's Denial of Christ, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns, the *Ecce Homo*, the Carrying of the Cross, the *Noli me tangere* – granted partial indulgences (typically seven years and seven *carenen* – quarantines, that is forty days). Seven locations also granted a plenary indulgence – the place of the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem, the Last Supper, Christ before Pilate, the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, the Entombment and the Resurrection. The two places include the patrons: Tommaso Portinari kneels before Christ in the scene of the Arrest, whilst Maria Baroncelli adores the Saviour during His Fall under the Cross. The site-specific inclusion of the donors suggests that they wished to secure for themselves the indulgences linked with these specific places. However, the idea of accumulating the indulgences was not of primary concern to the painting, as only fourteen episodes are linked with it from the total twenty-seven scenes. The portrayal of the sites with ascribed indulgences in various Panoramas of the Passion could be merely accidental, an automatic necessity linked to the pictorial convention of showing the biblical narrative set in places where pilgrims were granted indulgences.

In the Panorama from Turin, Memling skillfully and logically merges the chronological sequence of biblical episodes with the topography of the Holy Land. On the left there is the Mount of Olives with the Garden of Gethsemane, the building on Sion, the Temple Mount, the Old Town with the Palaces of Pilate and Herod, and the beginning of the *Via Crucis*; in the background is Golgotha, and on the right (separated from it) the territory of the future Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The biblical narrative unfolds in this imaginatively conceived topography of Jerusalem in such a way that the viewer finds a continuous route – the road of spiritual pilgrimage. It is not a simple and easy path. All Passion Panoramas give a general impression of the eastern city, in particular of Jerusalem, described in the accounts as having a labyrinth of streets, a meandering space with unclear divisions into districts and quarters. The individual buildings of the penitential path that leads through the city are merged into one, with structures brought together more tightly than one would infer from the descriptions in pilgrims' itineraries. The buildings are frequently transformed into monumental palaces, whilst in the accounts they were merely simple homes, or only empty spaces, covered by the churches and sanctuaries erected over them.



Fig. 601: Parisian workshop, *Passion Panorama*, woodcut, end of the fifteenth century, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France

Not all panoramas depict Jerusalem as a space with streets and squares through which one could (imaginatively) navigate, even though this would seem the key aim of a painting that served as an aid for spiritual pilgrimage. It is impossible to follow the roads of Jerusalem in the coloured woodcut with the panorama of the Passion of Christ published in Paris towards the end of the fifteenth century [fig. 601].⁵⁸³ The buildings – frontally opened, scenic mansions – are not arranged according to any topography but in a strictly symmetrical way that resembles the panels from an altarpiece, as if inscribed in an oval line on the city walls. The author builds the view of Jerusalem not as a spatial territory, but as a symbolic painterly construction. The composition is governed by artistic geometry and not geography. Following heraldic symmetry, in horizontal fields we see from the bottom the episodes of the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem and the Carrying of the Cross, and above these the scenes in the Palace of Pilate: the Crowning with Thorns, the Flagellation and the *Ecce Homo*. These are preceded on the left-hand side by the Last Supper in the Cenacle on Sion (the mount is not distinguished here); above, the chronologically earlier scenes of the three trials of Christ by

583 49 × 35,3cm. J. Białostocki, *Spätmittelalter und beginnende Neuzeit*, (Propyläen-Kunstgeschichte 7), Berlin 1972, no. 183.

Annas, Pilate and Caiaphas are depicted to maintain symmetry. The top field features the three hills: the Agony in the Garden, the Arrest (on the left), the Crucifixion at Golgotha (in the centre) and the Entombment (on a hill isolated from Golgotha, which indicates the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre). Along the right edge of the print a cavalcade of soldiers and tormentors moves upwards towards Golgotha, leading the two thieves and thus indicating the path of the *Via Crucis*. The Road to Calvary is not depicted in individual stages that reflect the stations of the Cross. The division of the space into districts and neighbouring hills – Sinai, Golgotha and the Mount of Olives – is illegible. The inscriptions provided assist our mental pilgrimage. They include titles of the specific events, or scenes, but they do not allow their spatial relations to be imagined within and outside the city. We may wonder if this composition could in fact aid in mental pilgrimage at all, or was it merely a devotional panel that brought to the fore the contemplation of the Body of Christ, displayed prominently in the central scene of the Flagellation and in the Crucifixion. However, I believe that this devotional meaning of the image appealed to the spatial and geographical imagination of the viewer. In a very general way, with the mind's eye, the devotee could reconstruct the city within the walls, the Mount of Olives, Golgotha and a very simplified Road to Calvary. In this abbreviated vision of the Holy Land, reduced to suggestions, the faithful located their meditation over the Passion of Christ in the contemplation of the *Corpus Domini*.



Fig. 602: Unknown Brussels Master, *Passion Panorama*, c. 1470–1490, Leuven, Museum M-Leuven

The space in another Passion Panorama created c. 1470 and 1490, probably in Brussels, is similarly non-structural and non-topographic, and is not without the influence of Memling's painting (for instance, the relief showing the Trial of Solomon in the crowning of the pavilion with the Trial of the high priest, probably Caiaphas). The work is preserved in the M-Museum in Leuven (101.7 × 148.6cm) [fig. 602].⁵⁸⁴ The *Passion from Leuven* shows a very tight urban space, as if one monumental building: a great complex of loggias, patios and pavilions that spread in planes one above another. We see streets and city squares, but characterised as autonomous proscenia. There is no route leading through the city. It is a set of abstract locations, disguised in a decorative architectural setting, and not the structure of an actual city. This arrangement reveals the inspiration of typical, architectural spaces depicted in contemporary Netherlandish panel paintings, and in particular those created in Brussels (by the Master of the Legend of St. Barbara, the Master of the Legend of St. Catherine, the Master of the Altarpiece of Orsoy, the Master of the View of the Church of St. Gudule, and others), whilst also drawing inspiration from local miniature painting.

As in the woodcut from Paris, here also the centre of the composition is dominated by a devotional figure – the naked figure of Christ in the scene of the Flagellation. The narrative stops in the act of devotional meditation and pious adoration. The Body of the Saviour is presented as the cult object *Corpus Domini*, venerated ever more widely since the increased importance of the Feast of the Corpus Christi. From the thirteenth century the feast took the form of a procession with four stations, and from the fifteenth century it sometimes included theatrical performances. This linked the feast with the procession of the Road to Calvary and the idea of the spiritual journey that follows the *Via Crucis*. However, the *Corpus Domini* was a triumphant feast: instead of emphasizing the pain of the Saviour it highlighted the significance of Maundy Thursday, which constituted the beginning of the Eucharist.

584 *The Passion Panorama from Leuven*: M. Smeyers in: *Dirk Bouts (ca. 1410–1475): een Vlaams primitief te Leuven*, ed. by M. Smeyers, exh. cat. Sint-Pieterskerk en Predikheren, Leuven 1998, cat. no. 177; V. Vanderkerkchove, "A Journey to Jerusalem: An Unknown Passion of Christ (Leuven, Vander Kelen-Mertens Museum)," in: *'Als ich can'. Liber amicorum in memory of Professor Dr. Maurits Smeyers*, ed. by B. Cardon, J. Van der Stock, vol. 1, Leuven–Paris 2002, pp. 1429–1441; K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, pp. 162–170.

Of course, despite the claustrophobic, quasi-architecture and the unclear location of the depicted territory, those familiar with pilgrim topography would be able to name the specific places. They would see the Golden Gate in the scene of the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem on the right-hand side (even though it is not golden but stony-grey); in the top right corner they would recognise the Mount of Olives (with the Agony in the Garden and the Arrest), and the neighbouring Cenacle (with the Last Supper), and the Houses of Annas and Caiaphas below (that included the scene of the Trials), both on Mount Sion (by the House of Annas they would notice the scene of the Denial of St. Peter). Further at the top is Solomon's Temple (with Christ cleansing it from the merchants), framed as a Gothic construction with flying buttresses. From the back they would see Judas entering the Temple to return the money for his betrayal (or perhaps only just then receiving payment from the priests). Those with an initiated eye would notice that below this, in the centre of the composition, there is the Palace of Pilate and of Herod (scenes of the Trial before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns, the Trial before Herod and the Ecce Homo). Further, on the left, is the Lion's Gate with the procession leading Christ down the Road to Calvary. They would easily identify Golgotha and the space of the Holy Sepulchre in the lower section of the painting, with scenes of the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, the Resurrection and the *Noli me tangere*, the scene of Christ appearing to St. Thomas and the Descent into Limbo. In the pilgrimage through the episodes of the Passion the viewer is assisted by the letters of the alphabet, written in golden letters above each scene, from "a" by the Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem to "v" in the scene of Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene. It is typical for the holy places to be marked in such panoramas, to assist devotees in following the chronology of events.

This system of letters, accompanied by explanatory texts describing the events and places, appears in the *Passion Panorama* in Lisbon (Museu Nacional do Azulejo, 200 × 200cm) [fig. 602].⁵⁸⁵ It is distinct from other similar panels because of its strong topographic realism and vast narrative. The fourteen letters of the alphabet (from A to N, with the omission of G and J) guide the viewer through the space, not according to the territorial

585 *The Passion Panorama from Lisbon*: M.-L. Lievens-De Waegh, *Le Musée National d'Art Ancien et le Musée National des Carreaux de Faïence de Lisbonne*, (Les primitifs flamands. Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas Méridionaux au quinzième siècle 16), Brussels 1991, pp. 46–105; T-H. Borchert et al., *Jan van Eyck und seine Zeit...*, cat. no. 3.



Fig. 603: Netherlandish master (active in Portugal?), *Passion Panorama*, 1495–1497 or c. 1500–1515, Lisbon, Museu Nacional do Azulejo

divisions, but following the biblical chronology. They allow the viewer to systematize the events located in the painting in terms of the historic narrative.

At the bottom of the painting there is a kneeling donor – Queen Eleanor of Portugal, who, according to tradition, received the work from her cousin, Emperor Maximilian I. Her companion is probably the Infanta Isabel de Trastámara, depicted as a widow before her second marriage to Manuel I the Fortunate in 1497. This identification is uncertain; perhaps it is another woman from the Queen’s entourage. In all likelihood, Eleanor commissioned the painting from a Netherlandish painter active in Portugal or ordered it from the Netherlands. She gave it to the Poor Clares from the Convent of Madre de Deus in Xabregas (in the eastern quarter of Lisbon), of which she was a foundress and patroness (1509), and in which she spent her final years. The Convent is nowadays the location of the Museu Nacional

do Azulejo. The painting is dated to c. 1495–1497, if the female companion is to be identified with Isabel de Trastámara, but stylistically it seems to be a later picture, probably from c.1500–1510.

The narrative presented in the Lisbon picture consists of twenty-eight episodes, beginning with the Last Supper, and ending with the Entombment. The two scenes are shown near each other in the top left corner of the composition. This indicates that the narrative forms a circle, encompassing the central city with the Temple of Solomon in the middle. No specific event takes place in the Temple, which merely serves as a topographic marker. It is clearly inspired by Erhard Reuwich's image of the map of Jerusalem, which illustrates the famous *Peregrinatio in terram Sanctam* by Bernhard von Breydenbach (edition of 1486) [fig. 564].⁵⁸⁶ Certain elements are similar to those within Reuwich's map: the Golden Gate, and the neighbouring double turret in the city walls. Other elements of the architecture are however products of artistic fantasy.

The narrative of the Passion and the visual pilgrimage through Jerusalem and its surroundings begins on Mount Sion on the left-hand side. The Cenacle (marked with a letter A) depicts the Last Supper, and as a separate component, shown below, the Washing of the Disciples' Feet. This is followed by three episodes of St. Peter's Denial of Christ and the scene with Christ in prison, which accompany the events taking place in the Houses of Annas and of Caiaphas – the two trials of Christ before the high priest of Sanhedrin (letters E-F). On the side there is the suicide of Judas, hanging from the tree. The scene leads us out of the city, outside the city walls (though, in reality, Sion *was* outside the walls). Here, a lonely Peter moves away from Sion to the Mount of Olives. Toward the edge of the composition, in a rocky grotto, there is an episode that continues the story of Peter's denial of Christ – his weeping over his unfaithfulness to show his remorse.

Now the viewer's gaze moves towards the realm of the previous narrative – to the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives with – from right to left side – the Agony in the Garden, the Sleeping Apostles (letter B), the Arrest of Christ (letter C) depicted as a great turmoil and fight, with the episodes of St. Peter slashing off Malchus's ear and the Fleeing Disciple robed in bed linen (Matthew 14:52), and soldiers leading Christ back to the city (letter D). It is notable that the Temple Mount is shown in its accurate position, opposite to the Mount of Olives, a motif omitted from other Panoramas of the Passion. The city could be reached from the Mount of Olives through the bridge over the Josephat Valley,

586 R. Öhme, "Die Palästinakarte aus Bernhard von Breitenbachs Reise in Das Heilige Land 1486," in: *Aus der Welt des Buches: Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag von Georg Lech*, Leipzig 1950, pp. 70–85.

mentioned in various pilgrims' accounts, which is shown to the left in the foreground. Nearby, next to the Temple, there is Judas leaving with his payment (or alternatively returning to the building to give it back to the priests). Subsequent episodes of the story take place in the multi-storeyed Palace of Pilate (letter H), and they include from the top: Christ before Pilate, the Crowning with Thorns, the Flagellation, the Mocking and the *Ecce Homo*.

Further, on the street next to the Palace of Pilate, there is a scene with Christ being led to the *Via Crucis*; the group is joined by soldiers and city dwellers coming from the left down the road behind the Solomon's Temple; the procession commences with the group of the Virgin, the three Marys and St. John the Evangelist, coming from Sion. Through a large gate the crowd leaves the city and heads towards Golgotha. This place, in a manner different to other panoramas, is the place of both the Crucifixion and the Entombment, which was confirmed by contemporary pilgrims' accounts. At the foot of the mountain (letter K), Christ falls under the Cross, and we see Veronica's veil (with an inscription above that reads *Salve sancta facies*) and the swooning Virgin, supported by St. John the Evangelist; further on the hill (marked with letters L-N) are the final scenes: the Division of Christ's garments, the Crucifixion, the Lamentation and the Entombment.

In this way, circling around the Solomon's Temple, the viewer moved down the districts of the city from Sion, through the Mount of Olives, the Old Town with Pilate's House and the beginning of the *Via Crucis*, towards Golgotha; the letters helped viewers to avoid confusion as regards the chronology of the events.



Fig. 604: Hans Memling, *The Seven Joys of the Virgin*, 1479, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek

A more general view of the Holy Land, not limited to Jerusalem, and corresponding to the geographic territory of the pilgrimages described in the guidebooks and diaries, was extremely rare. It was seemingly attempted only by Memling, in his painting of the *Seven Joys of the Virgin*, commissioned in 1479 by Pieter Bultinc, his wife Kathelijm van Rijebeke and son Adriaen, for the chapel of the *huidenvetters* (the guild of tanners) in Onze-Lieve-Vrouwkerk, where it was displayed in 1480 (now in Alte Pinakothek, Munich) [fig. 604].⁵⁸⁷ The donor and his son kneel in the bottom left corner, by the scene of the Nativity of Christ, with the patroness on the opposite side, near the scene of Pentecost. On the large panel (81 × 189cm), in a vast landscape, Memling placed twenty-five episodes from the Annunciation (on the left, in the back) to the Assumption of the Virgin (in the top right hand corner). The Holy Land is shown as a free, spacious land with mountains, valleys, cities and lakes: on the left Nazareth in Galilee (the Annunciation); on the left and in the centre in the foreground Bethlehem and its environs (the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi); above to the left, the territory between Jerusalem and Bethlehem (the Massacre of the Innocents, the Miraculous Field of Wheat); in the middle at the top, Jerusalem (the Three Magi before Herod), and behind it a road that leads from an unspecified harbor to Jerusalem and Bethlehem (the Magi approach the shore, then moved through the valley near Jerusalem and further on through a canyon in some rocky mountains); the Josephat Valley between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, and Golgotha, on the bottom left. Golgotha features scenes of the Resurrection, the *Noli me tangere*, the Two Marys heading to the Tomb, and the Mount of Olives (the Ascension). Finally on the edge to the left, and separated from the realm of Jerusalem as a completely independent city space, is Mount Sion (where Pentecost, the Apparition of Christ to the Virgin, the Dormition of the Virgin, and above in the sky, the Assumption of the Virgin are all featured). These scenes are complemented by others in the background and at the horizon: the Road to Emmaus (the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus, the Supper at Emmaus), the Sea of Galilee (the Miraculous Catch of Fish), and three depictions of the Mount of Temptation, to illustrate the three Temptations of Christ.

The imagined topography is entirely different from that created by Memling in the *Passion from Turin*, where Sion was included as part of Jerusalem; here it became a separate city. He seemingly maintained the same sequence of hills surrounding the city: Golgotha, Sion, and the Mount

587 *Seven Joys of the Virgin* by Hans Memling: De Vos Memling 1994, no. 38; V.J. Hull, *Spiritual pilgrimage in the paintings of Hans Memling*; M. Kirkland-Ives, *Narrative Performance and Devotional Experience in the Art of Hans Memling*, pp. 19–25, 231–253; Lane Memling 2009, chapter 8.II, pp. 155–162 and no. 45.

of Olives, but in the Panorama from Munich all these hills, instead of surrounding the Old Town, are now on its one side. He repeated in both paintings the motif of the identical dome in the building on the Temple Mount, but other buildings are not intended to resemble actual structures. What can we infer from this? It seems that the painter was loosely inspired by the topography of the Holy Land, shaping it according to his imagination and to the chronological order of the scenes. Here he required the space to develop three main thematic sequences: the infancy of Christ, before and after the Nativity, the history of the Three Magi, and the fate of the Virgin after the Resurrection of Christ. At the same time, he wanted to highlight three key triumphant episodes that confirmed the Virgin's role in the history of Salvation: the Nativity (on the left), the Adoration of the Magi (in the centre) and Pentecost (on the right). Neither the topography, nor the selection of the scenes reveal clear borrowings from pilgrim literature. The only element of the reality of sacred history is a column in the scene of the Nativity, upon which is the coat of arms of the donor. This must be the column against which the Virgin supported herself during the delivery of her Son. However, even this element is not drawn from the pilgrims' accounts, but from the *Revelations* of St. Bridget of Sweden, and function rather widely in the iconography of the subject (for instance in Rogier der Weyden's *Bladelin Altarpiece*). The painting, like the panorama of the landscape that forms the setting for the events from the Gospel and the Story of the Apostles, attempts to reconstruct, or rather create the sacred topography of the Holy Land; but it is not closely related to pilgrim literature or handbooks for spiritual pilgrimage.

Not all the depicted episodes were associated with the indulgences granted during the pilgrimage (real or virtual) that followed the steps of the Virgin in the Holy Land. From twenty-five scenes only ten are linked to this practice. Five places and events granted plenary indulgences (the Annunciation, the Dormition of the Virgin, the Ascension, the manger of the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi, and The Holy Sepulchre from the scene of the Resurrection), and five granted a partial indulgence (the place of the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the Massacre of the Innocents, the *Noli me tangere*, the Apparition of Christ to the Virgin, and the Assumption). It seems that the painting acted as a didactic-devotional vision of the stages from the sacred narrative related to the Virgin, upon which the spectator should meditate and pray.

Furthermore, the inscription on the lost frame, and the note in an inventory of the guild confirm that the painting assisted in prayer for the souls of the dead, for whom daily masses were said. This contradicts the theory about the painting being commissioned to aid spiritual pilgrimage. Therefore, the souls of the patrons were not to be saved

through the accumulation of indulgences, but through the offices of the dead, ordered at the time of the commission of the painting, and through the altar on which it was placed. Thus, we have a painting, previously discussed as a tool for virtual pilgrimage (in particular by Barbara G. Lane), which upon closer inspection of its composition and motifs reveals a very different function. The work can be discussed in terms of a general and loose analogy to the creation of the topography of biblical episodes, and therefore as an attempt to visualise holy places, but as nothing more.

This appeal to a cautious interpretation of Passion Panoramas is relevant for other works, as the function of these representations is rarely straightforward.



Fig. 605: Hans Memling, *Passion Altarpiece*, 1491, Lübeck, St. Annen-Museum – detail

Were all panoramas aids in spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land, treated literally, as objects, which the devotee approached with a book – a guide to the Holy Land, or an index of all the places that granted indulgences – as a key to the episodes depicted? Kathryn M. Rudy writes: “It is possible

that the readers of the guidebooks for virtual pilgrimage read them whilst looking at these pictures...”⁵⁸⁸ This would be a rather unlikely, awkward, and impractical mode of reception. Is the arrangement of the scenes always based on the places with ascribed indulgences? No; indeed most panoramas show a significantly wider spectrum of episodes than only those that grant indulgences. Was the ability to visualize a spiritual pilgrimage the only and primary goal of these panoramas? As I have already argued, this was not always the case. Some paintings denied the spatial relations necessary for virtual pilgrimage, instead highlighting their devotional and meditative nature, as seen in the Corpus Christi image in the *Passion from Leuven* and on the woodcut from Paris produced towards the end of the century. Other images had a different function from the outset, for instance that of a device stimulating prayers and offices for the souls of dead donors, as in the case of Memling’s altarpiece of the *Seven Joys of the Virgin*, now in Munich. They could act as epitaphs on an altarpiece in a private chapel, again to stimulate prayers for the dead, as in the *Passion Altarpiece* by Memling in Lübeck (Sankt-Annemuseum, 1491) [fig. 605], where in the side panels the painter included the story set within a panorama of Jerusalem. The primary function, described by the donor, did not rule out other secondary aims – such as the visualisation that enabled the faithful gathered before an altarpiece to embark on a virtual pilgrimage in their minds – as in the case of the epitaph of Adelheid Tucher in Nuremberg. However, one needs to consider the secondary role of the latter function. Did painters really read the devotional and pilgrimage texts that were available? I hope to have shown that they did not treat their works as illustrations or direct translations of the text into image. They created a vision of the holy space, imagined and conceived, always subject to the historic narrative. They did construct the space of the visual pilgrimage to correspond with the actual pious journey, but they did not compare it to guidebooks, itineraries and descriptions of the places that granted indulgences directly for accuracy. They frequently appealed to the more common knowledge of the Bible, a source of basic information about the topography of the Holy Land. In that sense the paintings themselves were virtual pilgrimages, but only in parallel to the distinct spiritual pilgrimages that were based on literary sources. The painted panoramas and the pilgrim literature belonged to two separate though related types of devotion.

588 K.M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent...*, p. 170.

VII. THE AGENCY OF THINGS AND HUMANS – FINAL REMARKS

Not all objects introduced by artists to the social contexts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were animated or stimulated active interaction by inviting the beholder to hold and handle them. However, the majority of things did work in that way, and all things influenced the sensorium that became active and formative. Objects determined the common models of life, and forged common models of piety and power in the culture of the fifteenth-century Europe. They participated in the establishing and promotion of a religiosity based on cult and liturgy (as seen for instance in the altarpieces). They formed a model of official piety, intertwined with dynastic glorification, that celebrated the figure of the pious ruler (as seen in books of hours, prayer books with presentation miniatures and specific sets of prayers, skillfully made goldsmiths' objects *etc.*) Works of art promoted devotional reform and the *devotio moderna* movement, focusing on private piety and meditation (for instance small panels, paintings, diptychs and triptychs). They developed – through influencing the senses – the concept of visions and internal spiritual imagination as a common mode of religious activity. They linked private devotion with the manifestation of social status. They developed the new mental and educational modes used by fifteenth-century merchants and bankers, literate men who measured and counted, finding words, texts and measures in works of art. They provided support to the communal functioning of religious confraternities and social brotherhoods, thus assisting the corporate nature of city life. They formed the rituals of religious and social lives. They actively promoted faith in indulgences and salvation through pious pilgrimage, whether real, enacted by proxy, or embarked upon spiritually. They nourished a belief in the magical power of relics and miraculous images. They constructed in various ways the devotion of clergymen and monastic piety (for instance the figures of Christ Child to be caressed, dressed and taken care of). They defined the status of a woman according to the new fashions of monastic and lay piety (the book of hours, the donor portraits in panel paintings, and in diptych and triptychs). They played an invaluable role in the description of the world outside religion, constructing lay visual culture at the court and in the cities.

Nearly all of this took place through the emulation of and dialogue with artistic conventions, established in Burgundy, France and the Netherlands: with the formula of the ducal tomb and the patrician epitaph; with the genre of the illuminated book of hours and prayer books; with the *en grisaille* mode and monochromatic miniatures, panel paintings and sculptures; with painted and carved (or simply painted) winged altarpieces, which transformed into monumental sculptural and painted polyptychs; with panels containing moral instructions about the religious life, or else containing extensive texts and images; with various types of paintings for private devotion; with panels that served spiritual pilgrimages, and in particular panoramas of the Passion; with devotional diptychs personalized by the inclusion of portraits; with the genre of independent portraiture. They defined a playful context: ludic joys for the middle class and sophisticated entertainment at court. They fashioned the sphere of the common lay imagination, developing the subject of nude and genre scenes (in particular in prints, but at times also in pictures).

Artistic objects supported specific modes of interaction between things and humans in their common environment: the haptic juxtaposed with the purely visual quality of seeing, sweeping and enveloping the space; a mobility of things and subjects that followed the model of *homo viator* – a man constantly travelling and moving through geographic space. They constituted a ritual of presentation based on the hieratic and devotional perception of face to face encounters of the beholder with a painting. They appealed to the memory and to the ability to read, developing a long narrative (illuminated manuscripts with chronicles, multi-episode altarpieces, painted and printed cycles *etc.*). They solicited a concentrated gaze and ability to see details, operating with minute elements, thus reinforcing an approach to the world that required a detailed and focused perception of it. They promoted such modes of seeing in their way of portraying human beings, the other – in veristic portraits, combining the similitude with a registration and glorification of the social status of the sitter. They also subverted sexual corporeality, not only in *stricte* erotic themes, which appeared in prints and in some paintings, but through a visualisation of the sex of Christ, the Virgin and the saints.

This sensory and “moving to move” activity of artefacts in the fifteenth century informed important concerns that have not been addressed in detail in this book.

The first of these is the perception of colours. Based on the tradition of symbolic relations between light and colour, and the terms *ornatus* and *splendor* taken from medieval aesthetics and theology, the perception of colours in the context of social relations and divisions in the Late Middle Ages was greatly developed. Colours entered the fabric (network) of contemporary societies and communities. The multicolour quality informed the production and trade of artistic objects such as textiles, embroidery, tapestries, illuminated books and vessels made from coloured glass. They were traded goods, means to obtain success, both financial and social, as well as being markers of social status and splendour. Brilliant colours, such as those found in tapestries, became increasingly popular in painted compositions. Polychromy transformed sculpture and architecture, accentuating coloured surfaces more vividly than in earlier periods. The prints produced at that time were frequently coloured. Within that context, a deliberate lack of colour was an exception, limited to the courtly and patrician milieu, and an indication of a particular sophistication. The new courtly mode of colour was more highly developed. The elite tonality of white-black-grey is seen in *grisaille* and *semi-grisaille*, the use of fashionable black (black clothes, black and silver book covers, “black prayer books”), or in white used in jewels executed with the elaborate technique of *émail-en-ronde-bosse*. The alabaster sculptures such as the carved tombs of rulers, dukes, and courtly elites promoted from the fourteenth century the ‘truth’ of materials; that is, of the surface, which should not be concealed under layers of paint. Towards the end of the fifteenth century and in the early sixteenth century, sculpture celebrated the monochromy of wooden figures. Apart from emphasising the materiality of the object, thus protecting the sculptor from accusations that they encouraged idolatry, such sculptures reflected the fashion of courtly culture and increased the social status of city patrons. Engraving, a more costly and sophisticated technique than woodcut, with its black and white tonality, was more suitable for elites collecting prints. The fashion for monochromatic artworks was also related to the wider accessibility of gold, with many golden or gilded objects circulating amongst wealthy patrons. The colour was no longer interpreted in purely symbolic terms as a sign of divinity and holiness. The value of the object and of the golden matter became equal, as it was the monetary power *and* the power of art (metalwork, golden panels and altarpieces) combined that mattered. The colour gold – contrary to common belief – experienced a great resurgence of popularity in the late Middle Ages and in the early modern period.



Fig. 606: *Beautiful Madonna* from Breslau/Wrocław, c. 1390, National Museum in Warsaw

Another concern omitted from my discussion is the late medieval visual culture of the body, corporeality and sexuality. It was based on the traditional concepts of body in the Middle Ages, associated with sin. However, contrary to common belief, it was not an absolute taboo. Taboo is a modern, nineteenth-century invention. In the fifteenth century, the body was not a taboo, but a matter of social “decorum.” The body, nudity, gender and sex appeared in public debate and literature quite openly, for instance in the writings of Jean Gerson, a popular theologian from the Sorbonne, who discussed in his texts the body, puberty, and nocturnal emissions. Bodily fluids were the subject of discourse, and the body was its vessel. The virginity of a woman and a man undoubtedly formed an important and frequent artistic

theme. Puberty was included in the debate on moral adulthood and responsibility. It was also incorporated in the realm of the sacred, which sanctified the earthly everyday sphere of life – through theological terms and images such as the *Corpus Domini* and *Maria lactans*. The body of the Virgin was treated as real and art constantly faced the challenge of revealing a part of her naked body, typically robed in expensive garments. Christ's genitals were frequently displayed in paintings and sculptures to highlight the fullness of the Incarnation [fig. 606].

The physicality of lay people governed the art of portraiture, including images on tombstones. These depictions can be discussed in terms of gender and from a feminist perspective: women are commonly portrayed as figures with standardized physiognomies, whilst men are depicted with great realism, if not verism, as if to highlight their legal and personal status in a patriarchal society (there is an opposition therefore between “faceless” women and highly individualized men). A portrait was an image of the body – a representation of power and possession. The privilege of a personalized, named image belonged primarily to men.

The Late Middle Ages engaged with the theme of the sexual body in its writings (the aforementioned Jean Gerson and many others) and in the arts. It was demonstrated in prints and in lay manuscript illuminations, which carefully balanced depictions of erotic nudity from underneath costumes in a literal sense and as well as in the metaphorical meaning of *decorum*, defined by the described narrative: for instance the fate of the protagonists in the ancient story or contemporary *chansons de geste*. From beneath the curtain of the *decorum* appeared rather frequently various obscenities, at times in moralising vestiges, and at times simply ludic. Finally, art was fascinated with the visualisation of corpses – ubiquitous at a time of plagues and omnipresent death – at once tactile and untouchable (as seen in *transi* monuments displaying cadavers, motifs of dead bodies, corpses and skeletons in prints, illuminations and wall paintings).

The third concern, only briefly mentioned in this book, are images of the lay world. These representations were once omnipresent: on tapestries, illuminated manuscripts, painted panel paintings and in prints in particular. All these artworks contained many stories about ancient times, about knights, courtly life, hunting, tournaments, the dance of the Moriscos, banquettes, and guild ceremonies. Illustrated books depicted other worlds: exotic places and tribes; prints and sculptures included an abundance of wild men, and symbols of nature contrasted with culture. Genre scenes with people of lowly social status, such as peasants, or other common folks became fairly common, which was permitted according to the *stilus humilis* (*modus comicus*) adopted from ancient rhetoric.

And finally, the fourth concern: the organic world, the world of nature untamed by civilization. It was an aspect of great importance for the Late Medieval Art, present in the architectural ornaments of churches, palaces, and communal buildings, and an autonomous theme in paintings, prints and sculptures. The artificial nature of the so-called floral or arboreal style, abundant in church interiors, on carved altarpieces and in prints, supplemented the architectural construction of microarchitecture, or the painterly composition of altarpieces. Again, the world of wild nature took control over civilization, which had been constructed intellectually. It pointed to the original state of mankind, before we had learned to build, though Vitruvius wrote that people learned to build by imitating nature: canopies of leaves in forests, columns of tree trunks *etc.* I discussed this briefly in chapter III.1.4. But the floral and arboreal spectrum of art in the Late Middle Ages and in early sixteenth-century art (as presented in Ethan Matt Kavaler's articles and his book *Renaissance Gothic*) is wider and has many more aspects than those which I mention here.

All these themes omitted from the present book – body, colour theories, the secular character of late medieval art, the opposition between culture (*i.e.* Christianity) and nature – whilst being related to the subject of the study exceed its realm through being issues that are strictly cultural and anthropological. They do not belong to the category of the agency of things, which is why they had to be set aside in this discussion. They are interesting and important, which is why they deserve a new, independent study. Perhaps, one to be written in the future...

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 45. Gerard Horenbout, *Visitation*, illumination from the *Sforza Hours*, 1519–1520, London, British Library, ms. Add 34294, fol. 61r (© British Library, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
 46. Master E.S., *Apostles Philip and James the Lesser*, from the *Apostles* series, engraving, 1467, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1922 (22.83.3) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
 47. Master E.S., the so-called *Great Madonna of Einsiedeln*, 1466, engraving, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett, A 409 (© Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, photo: Artothek)
 48. Master of the First Prayer book of Maximilian I (Master of Maximilian), illumination from the *Hastings Hours*, 1483, London, British Library, ms. Add. 54782 (© British Library, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
 49. Attributed to the Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian (Alexander Bening?), *Saint Luke* and painted border with dragonfly, in the *Grimani Breviary*, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Ms. Lat. I, 99, fol. 781v. (photo: author's archive)
 50. Simon Bening, illumination from the *Imhoff Prayer Book*, 1511, Londyn, Christie's, 21.06.1988, lot no. 107 (photo: Christie's, Public domain)
 51. Master of the Dresden Prayer Book, folio from the *Hours of Isabella the Catholic*, before 1497, London, Christie's Sales Catalogue, 6.7.2011, lot no. 26 (photo: Christie's, Public domain)
 52. Rogier van der Weyden, *Descent from the Cross*, c. 1435 – before 1443, Madrid, Museo del Prado (© Museo Nacional del Prado, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)

53. *Ommegang* in Leuven in 1594, print from 1861 (in: Edward van Even, *L'Omgang de Louvain*, Louvain–Bruxelles 1863)
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56. Albrecht Dürer, *Study Sheet with Nine Sketchs of St. Christopher*, drawing, 1521, Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, KdZ 4477 (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie)
57. Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Battle of the Nude Men*, engraving, c. 1470–1475, Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 34–188 (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
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305. Veit Stoss, *Bamberg Altarpiece* – altarpiece of the Carmelite Church in Nuremberg, 1520–1523, Bamberg Cathedral (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
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307. Master from Utrecht?, *Dominican Friars Adoring the Virgin and Child in a Church*, c. 1520, Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent (© Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht; photo from: S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, Oxford University Press, 2008)
308. Master of the Agilolf Altarpiece, *Mass of St. Agilolf*, c. 1520, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, WRM 467 (©Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln, photo: I. Hiller, H. Vey, *Katalog der deutschen und niederländischen Gemälde bis 1550*, WRM 1969)
309. Master of Mary of Burgundy, *Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, 1477, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1857, fol. 14v – illumination showing *Margaret of York* (or *Mary of Burgundy*) *Reading a Prayer Book* and *The Virgin and Child in a Church Adored by Mary of Burgundy* (or *Margaret*

- of York) and Maximilian of Austria* (© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, photo: Open Access)
310. *The Celebration of a Mass* – the illumination in the codex of *Ascetische tractaten*, 1468–1477, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9272–76, fol. 55r (© KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique)
 311. Gerard Horenbout, *The Mass in the Honour of the Holy Trinity* and *The Mass in the Honour of the Virgin Mary* – miniatures in the *Rothschild Book of Hours*, c. 1510, Christie's New York, Sale 2819, 29.01.2014, previously in Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2844, fol. 16v and 75v – with closed triptychs in the lower parts of the altarpieces (© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, photo: Open Access)
 312. *The Distribution of Holy Communion* – illumination in the manuscript *Seelengärtlein – Hortulus Animae*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2706 (© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, photo: Open Access)
 313. Hans Pleydenwurff and Workshop, panels of the *Altarpiece of St. Clare's Convent in Bamberg: St. Clare receives a Branch of the Easter Willow Tree Palm* and *St. Clare experiences a vision of the Holy Sacrament*, c. 1460–1462, Bamberg, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie (© Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie Bamberg)
 314. Hans Pleydenwurff and Workshop, panel of the *Altarpiece of St. Clare's Convent in Bamberg: The Investiture of St. Clare*, c. 1460–1462, Bamberg, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie (© Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie Bamberg)
 315. Master from Antwerp, *A Sermon on Charity* (possibly *The Conversion of Saint Anthony*), c. 1520, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund (08.183.2) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
 316. Konrad Witz, *Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine*, c. 1440, Strasburg, Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame (©Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame, Strasbourg; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
 317. Joos van Cleve, *The Annunciation*, c. 1525, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931, 32.100.60
 318. Joos van Cleve, *The Dormition of the Virgin*, central panel of the triptych, 1515, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (© Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)

319. Joos van Cleve, *The Dormition of the Virgin*, central panel of the triptych, before 1523, Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek (© Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
320. Master from Nuremberg, active in Breslau/Wrocław, or a local Breslau master, *Triptych of Canon Peter Wartenberg*, 1468, Warsaw, National Museum (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie)
321. Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, 1432, Ghent, St. Bavo's Cathedral – partially opened (photo: author / BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
322. Nikolaus Obilman, Polyptych from the Parish Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Legnica, 1466, Warsaw, National Museum – reconstruction of the original arrangement of the figures and panels (after Jacek Witkowski); the lowest panels without ground; including: *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well* (photo: Jacek Witkowski, *Gotycki ołtarz główny kościoła Świętych Piotra i Pawła w Legnicy*, 1997)
323. Master of James IV of Scotland (Gerard Horenbout?), *King James IV of Scotland before an Altar*, a miniature in the *Book of Hours of James IV of Scotland*, c. 1502–1503, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, ms. 1897, fol. 24v (© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, photo: Open Access)
324. *Coronation of the King*, illumination from the *Roman Pontifical of Erasmus Ciołek*, c. 1510–1515, Cracow, National Museum, Czartoryski Library, ms. Czart.1212 IV, fol. XXXVI (© Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie)
325. Master of the Legend of St. Bruno, *The Miracle of the Speaking Corpse of St. Bruno*, c. 1488–1489, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, detail (© Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
326. Master of the Legend of St. Ursula, *St. Ursula Praying before the Altar with her Parents*, panel of the *Altarpiece of St. Ursula*, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (© Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
327. *The Ghent Altarpiece* by Jan van Eyck, view with the diagonal opening of wings (photo: author / BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
328. Master from the workshop of Robert Campin, Master of the Seilern Triptych, *Seilern Triptych*, c. 1427–1435, London, The Courtauld Gallery, photo of the display (Public domain)

329. Rogier van der Weyden, *Altarpiece of the Seven Sacraments*, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (© Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, photo: Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)
330. The workshop of Master of Flémalle, probably the young Rogier van der Weyden, *Mérode Altarpiece*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1956, 56.70a–c (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
331. Rogier van der Weyden's workshop, *Abegg Triptych (Triptych of the Crucifixion, The De Villa Triptych)*, Riggisberg, Abegg-Stiftung, 14.2.63 (photo: © Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg, CH-3132; public domain)
332. Rogier van der Weyden, *Braque Triptych*, c. 1452, Paris, Musée du Louvre (© RMN-GP, photo: RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
333. Rogier van der Weyden, *Triptych of the Crucifixion*, after 1447, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie (© KHM-Museumsverband; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
334. Dirk Bouts, Hugo van der Goes and Aert van den Bossche, *Triptych of the Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus*, before 1475 – c. 1480, Leuven, Sint-Salvatorskerk (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
335. Hans Memling, *Triptych of Jan Crabbe*, before 1465; central panel – Vicenza, Museo Civico; wings – New York, The Morgan Library & Museum (© Pinacoteca Civica di Palazzo Chiericati, Vicenza / © The Morgan Library & Museum, New York, photo: Graham S. Haber)
336. Hans Memling, *Altarpiece of the Moreel Family*, 1484 – before 1489, Bruges, Groeningemuseum (photo: © Musea Brugge)
337. Gerard David, *Sedano Triptych*, Paris, Musée du Louvre (© RMN-GP, photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
338. Gerard David, *Triptych of the Baptism of Christ*, Bruges, Groeningemuseum (photo: © Musea Brugge)
339. Jheronimus Bosch, *Triptych of the Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1495–1500, Madrid, Museo del Prado (© Museo Nacional del Prado; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
340. Workshop of Pasquier and Jehan Grenier, *The Battle with the Sagittary and the Conference at Achilles*, tapestry from the series of the *Trojan War*, c. 1475–1490, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1952, 52.69 (©

- The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
341. Workshop from Brussels, Tapestries from the series *History of the Salvation of Mankind*, commissioned by Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, c. 1505–1515, Palencia Cathedral (photo: author's archive)
 342. Workshop from Brussels, Tapestry *Christ Is Born as Man's Redeemer* from the series *History of the Redemption of Mankind* for Burgos Cathedral, commissioned by Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, c. 1514–1524 (before 1526), New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Fletcher and Rogers Funds, and Bequest of Gwynne M. Andrews, by exchange, 1938, 38.28 (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
 343. Jean Boudolf, Nicolas Bataille, Robert Poinçon, *Angers Apocalypse*, series of tapestries, 1373–1382, Château d'Angers (© Château d'Angers, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
 344. Jean Boudolf, Nicolas Bataille, Robert Poinçon, *Angers Apocalypse*, series of tapestries, 1373–1382, Château d'Angers (© Château d'Angers, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
 345. Workshop from the Southern Netherlands, design: Parisian Painter (Jean Perréal?, Jean d'Ypres?, Master of Anne of Brittany?), "À mon seul désir" – *Lady Refuses to Accept a Necklace*, one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn*, executed for Jean or Antoine Le Viste, c. 1484–1500, Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge (Hôtel de Cluny) (photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
 346. *Taste (Honesty?)* – one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn* (photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
 347. *Smell (Beauty?)* – one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn* (photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
 348. *Touch (Abundance?)* – one of the six tapestries from the series of the *Lady with the Unicorn* (photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
 349. Castle of Emperor Charles IV in Karlstein/Karlštejn, Bohemia, c. 1348–1365 (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)

350. Castle in Karlstein/Karlštejn, cross section of the structure, drawing by Josef Mocker from the end of the 19th century (Karlstein Castle Collection); from the right hand side: Palace (Palas), Small Tower, Great Tower (© Státní hrad Karlštejn, photo: Radovan Boček, Prague)
351. Castle in Karlstein/Karlštejn, Chapel of the Holy Cross in the Great Tower, 1361/1362–1364/1365 (photo: Jan Białostocki's archive)
352. Tonnerre, the hospital church of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles, access to the chapel with the Holy Sepulchre (photo: S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, Oxford University Press, 2008)
353. Jean Michel and Georges de la Sonnette, the Holy Sepulchre (*Saint-Sépulchre*), 1452–1454, Tonnerre, the hospital church of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles – view from above from the entrance to the chapel (photo: S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, Oxford University Press, 2008)
354. Jean Michel and Georges de la Sonnette, the Holy Sepulchre (*Saint-Sépulchre*), 1452–1454, Tonnerre, the hospital church of Notre-Dame-des-Fontenilles – frontal view (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
355. Master from Lower Saxony from the circle of Conrad von Soest, and Lower Rhine Master from the circle of the Master from Sankt Lorenz, *Golden Panel*, c. 1418–1420, Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum – panels of the closed polyptych (© Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover, photo: Artothek)
356. *Golden Panel* – panels of the polyptych as seen in the first opening (with external wings opened) (© Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover, photo: Artothek)
357. *Golden Panel* – fully opened polyptych (with external and internal wings opened) – engraving by Johann Christoph Böcklin after a drawing by L. A. Gebhard, in Sigismund Hosmann, *Fürtreffliches Denck-Mahl der Göttlichen Regierung...*, Celle 1700 (photo: Deutsche Inschriften Online: DI 24, Nr. 16)
358. Martin Schongauer, *Censer*, c. 1480–1491, engraving, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1926 (26.41) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
359. Northern Netherlandish Master, *Censer* from Edam, after Schongauer's print, c. 1500–1510, Haarlem, Archbishop's Palace (photo: © Web Gallery of Art)

360. Israhel van Meckenem, *Vir dolorum* – engraving after the icon from the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, c. 1490–1500, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)
361. *Vir dolorum*, Byzantine mosaic with an icon, c. 1300, Rome, Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (photo: author's archive)
362. Master E.S., *The Great Virgin of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, photo: Artothek)
363. Master E.S., *The Middle Virgin of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
364. Master E.S., *The Small Virgin of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
365. German Master from c. 1420, *St. Dorothy*, woodcut, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (©Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
366. *Pietà from the Castle in Maibingen*, woodcut, first half of the 15th century, Vienna, Albertina (©Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
367. Southern German Master from c. 1410–1420, *The Crucifixion*, coloured woodcut, Graz, Bibliothek der Karl-Franz-Universität (photo: Jan Białostocki's archive)
368. *The Holy Family*, coloured woodcut, c. 1400, Vienna, Albertina (©Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
369. *St. Christopher*, coloured woodcut, 1423, Manchester, The University of Manchester Library, John Rylands Library, Blockbook 17249.2 (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
370. Anonymus printmaker after the Master of the Berlin Passion, *The Road to the Calvary*, metalcut, hand-coloured, from the series of forty cuts *The Fall of Man and the Life and Passion of Christ*, ca. 1470–1480, London, British Museum, 1912,0808.25 (© The Trustees of the British Museum, London)
371. Master E.S., engravings from the series *Apostles with the Text of the Creed*, c. 1455–1460, Vienna, Albertina (© Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
372. Master E.S., engravings from the series *Christ as Salvator Mundi and (Standing) Apostles*, c. 1450–1455; *Christ*: London, British Museum; *Apostles*: Dresden,

- Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (© The Trustees of the British Museum, London / Artothek)
373. Master E.S., *Apostles Surrounding the Enthroned Christ*, engraving, c. 1455–1460, Vienna, Albertina (© Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
374. Master E.S., engravings from the series of *Apostles (seated)*, c. 1450–1455, Vienna, Albertina (© Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
375. Master E.S., engravings from the series of *Apostles Standing in Niches*, 1467, London, British Museum; Vienna, Albertina; Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (© The Trustees of the British Museum, London / © Albertina, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw / © Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, photo: Artothek)
376. Master E.S., two series of engravings: *Medallions with Pairs of Seated Apostles* and *Medallions with Pairs of Standing Apostles*, c. 1460–1465 Vienna, Albertina and Oxford, Ashmolean Museum (© Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw / © Oxford, Ashmolean Museum)
377. Master E.S., Series of rounded engravings *The Passion of Christ and figures of the Church Fathers and Saints*, c. 1460–1465, Basel, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett (© Kunstmuseum Basel)
378. Master E.S., Series of rounded engravings displaying *Four Evangelists*, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (photo: © Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen)
379. Georg or Paul Schongauer, *Pax* (view of the inside), gilded silver, engraved silver plaquettes: *Agony in the Garden* and *The Arrest of Christ* after engravings by Martin Schongauer, c. 1490–1500, Basel, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett (photo: author's archive)
380. Master E.S., engravings that can be assembled into series: *The Annunciation* (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum), *The Visitation* (Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett), *The Nativity* (Vienna, Albertina) and *The Adoration of the Magi* (Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung), c. 1455–1460 (photo: © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin / © Albertina, Wien / © Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
381. Master E.S., engravings that can be assembled into series: *The Visitation* (Washington, The National Gallery of Art, *The Adoration of the Magi* (Dresden, Staatliche

- Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett) and *Pentecost* (same location), c. 1455–1460 (photo: © Courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington / © Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen)
382. Israhel van Meckenem, engravings from the series *Well- and Ill-Matched Couples*, c. 1495–1503, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection; New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Wallerstein, 1955 (55.527); New York, Cooper–Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum (© Courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington / © Cooper–Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw / © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
383. Israhel van Meckenem, *Children Bathing* or *Children Playing*, a pair of engravings Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
384. Albrecht Dürer, *The Angelic Mass*, drawing, c. 1500, Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie (© Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, Rennes; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
385. Master E.S., *A Youngster Embracing a Girl*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Basel, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett (© Kunstmuseum Basel)
386. Master E.S., *A Knight and a Lady*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (© Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen)
387. Master E.S., *A Fool Fondling a Naked Girl*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (© Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen)
388. Israhel van Meckenem, *Couple Seated on a Bed*, engraving from the series *Scenes of Everyday Life*, 1495, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1918 (18.90.1) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
389. Hans Süss von Kulmbach, *A Girl Making a Wreath from Forget-Me-Nots*, verso of the *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1510, New York, The Metropolitan Museum, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.21) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
390. Urs Graf, *Ill-Matched Couple (The choice between wealth and youth)*, woodcut, c. 1511, London, British Museum, 1875,0710.1455 (© The Trustees of the British Museum, London)

391. Housebook Master, *Peasant and a Countrywoman with a Coat-of-Arms*, two engravings and drypoints, c. 1475–1480, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet, RP-P-OB-939 and RP-P-OB-940 (© Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam, photo: open access, public domain)
392. Martin Schongauer, engraving from the series of *Wild Men and Wild Women with Coats-of-Arms*, c. 1480–1490, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1928 (28.26.9) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
393. Monogrammist b×g, *Pairs of Lovers in the Love Garden*, four engravings, c. 1480, Vienna, Albertina; Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France; Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Douce Bequest (photo: © Albertina / © Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München / © Bibliothèque nationale de France / © Ashmolean Museum Oxford)
394. Housebook Master, *Two Monks and Two Nuns*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1480, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet (© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, photo: public domain)
395. Housebook Master, *Falconers*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1485, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet (© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, photo: public domain)
396. Housebook Master, *Two Huntsmen with a Dog*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1480, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet (© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, photo: public domain)
397. Housebook Master, *The Hunting Party*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1485–1490, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)
398. Housebook Master, *The Deer Hunting*, engraving and drypoint, c. 1485–1490, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet (© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, photo: public domain)
399. Martin Schongauer, *The Virgin with a Parrot*, engraving, c. 1480–1485?, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1937 (37.3.6) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
400. Master E.S., *Pentecost*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, photo: Artothek)

401. Monogrammist b'xg, *Pair of Lovers in an Embrace*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1934 (34.38.6) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
402. Workshop from Sens?, *The Madonna Boubon*, c. 1200, Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, 1903, 71.152 (© Walters Art Gallery Baltimore, photo: CC0, open access)
403. Castillian workshop?, *Virgen abrida from Allariz*, c. 1280–1300, Allariz (Orense), Museo de Arte Sacro del Real Monasterio de Santa Clara (photo: E. Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015)
404. Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna from Roggenhausen/Rogoźno*, c. 1390–1400, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum (© Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg; photo: Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA-3.0)
405. Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna from Elbing/Elbląg*, c. 1390–1400, Lüneburg, Ostpreussisches Landesmuseum (© Ostpreussisches Landesmuseum Lüneburg, photo: E. Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015)
406. Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna*, c. 1390–1400, Paris, Musée National du Moyen-Âge, Hôtel de Cluny (photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
407. Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna of Klonowken / Klonówka*, c. 1390–1400, Pelplin, Diocesan Museum (© Muzeum Diecezjalne w Pelplinie)
408. Prussian-Teutonic workshop, *Shrine Madonna of Liebschau / Lubiszewo*, c. 1390–1400, Pelplin, Diocesan Museum (© Muzeum Diecezjalne w Pelplinie)
409. *Shrine Madonna from Yvonand*, c. 1380, Cheyres, Notre-Dame church, stolen, copy (photo: Commune d' Yvonand)
410. French workshop?, *Shrine Madonna of Morlaix*, c. 1390–1400, Morlaix, Saint-Matthieu church (photo: E. Gertsman, *Worlds Within: Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015)
411. Workshop from Rhineland, *Shrine Madonna*, c. 1300, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.185a–b) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)

412. Southern Netherlandish master (active in Toledo?), *Triptych of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin*, c. 1520–1525, Toledo, Monastery of Purísima Concepción (© Convento de la Purísima Concepción de Toledo, photo: Public domain)
413. *Santo Bambino*, Rome, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, copy of the 15th c. sculpture stolen in 1994 (photo: Public domain)
414. Master of the Madonna of Sant'Agostino, *Christ Child (Santo Bambino)*, c. 1320, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung, Bode-Museum (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)
415. Southern Netherlandish Workshop (Brabant), *Christ's Manger-crib*, polychromed wood, gilded, with silver and lead elements, painted parchment, and silk embroidery with seed pearls, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Ruth Blumka, in memory of Leopold Blumka, 1974 (1974.121.a-d) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
416. Niklaus Gerhaert van Leyden, *Christ Child*, c. 1465, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (© Bayerisches Nationalmuseum München)
417. Gregor Erhart, *Christ Child with the Globe*, c. 1500, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe (photo: archive of the department Medieval Art, The National Museum Warsaw)
418. Michel Erhart (?), *Christ Child*, c. 1480, Ulm, Ulmer Museum (© Ulmer Museum; photo: archive of the department Medieval Art, The National Museum Warsaw)
419. Florentine sculptor, Figure of Christ with moveable arms, taken from the crucifix, end of 15th c., Pisa, Chiesa di S. Croce in Fossabanda (photo: Kamil Kopania)
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437. Lower Franconian workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1470–1480, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 1955 (55.24) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
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440. Swabian workshop, *Christ on an Ass* from Veringendorf, end of the 14th c., Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum (photo: © Landesmuseum Württemberg)
441. Hans Multscher, *Christ on an Ass* from Sankt Ulrich und Afra church in Augsburg, 1456, Ulm, Ulmer Museum, on long-term loan from the Dominican convent in Wettenhausen (© Ulmer Museum)
442. Workshop of Hans Multscher, *Christ on an Ass* from the Minster of Ulm, 1464, Ulm, Ulmer Museum (© Ulmer Museum)
443. Workshop from Ulm?, *Christ on an Ass*, c. 1480, London, The Victoria & Albert Museum (©Victoria & Albert Museum, London)
444. Swabian Workshop, *Christ on an Ass*, end of the 15th c., Paris, Musée National du Moyen Âge, Hôtel Cluny (photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
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449. Monogrammist I.P., *Gliedermann*, c. 1520, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe (© MK&G Hamburg, Photo: Joachim Hiltmnn, Stanislaw Rowinski, Andreas Torneberg/MKG)
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451. Thomas Teichmann, *Death Riding a Lion*, from the clock of the choir of the Abbey church in Heilsbronn (Franconia), 1513, 145cm, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (© Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, München)
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457. Attributed to Johannes Regiomontanus, *Sundial of Pope Paul II*, c. 1464–1468 or before 1471, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, on loan from the Museen der Stadt Nürnberg, WI17 (© Germanisches Nationalmuseum, photo: Georg Janßen)
458. Figures from the *Crucifixion Group* from Lübeck by Bernt Notke and his assistants, during conservation in 1971 (photo: S. Nash, *Northern Renaissance Art*, Oxford University Press, 2008)
459. *The Justice of Trajan and Herkinbald*, tapestry, 1461, Bern, Historisches Museum—repetition after the panels painted by Rogier van der Weyden for the Golden Chamber of the Brussels City Hall, 1435–1445 (photo: IHS UW Photo Archive)
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461. Claus Sluter and Claux de Werve, *The Well of Patriarchs* (so-called *Well of Moses*), 1395–1404, Chartreuse de Champmol, Dijon (photo: Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)
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465. Bernt Notke and his workshop, *Crucifixion with Bishop Albert Krummedick*, 1472–1477, Lübeck Cathedral (photo: Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)
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473. Jean Pucelle, *The Book of Hours of Jeanne d’Évreux*, 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2 – the facsimile copy held in the hands by a reader (photo: Internet, Public domain)
474. Jean Pucelle, *The Book of Hours of Jeanne d’Évreux*, 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2 (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
475. Jan van Eyck, *Madonna van der Paele*, 1434–1436, Bruges, Groeningemuseum (photo: © Musea Brugge)
476. Jan van Eyck, *Madonna van der Paele* – detail (photo: © Musea Brugge)
477. Friedrich Herlin, detail of the retable of the main altar from the Church of Sankt Georg in Nördlingen, 1462, Nördlingen, Stadtmuseum (photo: Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)
478. Jan van Eyck, *The Annunciation*, c. 1435, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937.1.39 (© Courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington)

479. Jan van Eyck, *The Annunciation*, Washington, detail (© Courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington)
480. Rogier van der Weyden in the workshop of Robert Campin, *Portrait of a Lady*, c. 1435–1440, London, The National Gallery, NG653.2 (© The National Gallery, London; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
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482. Jan van Eyck, *Dresden Triptych*, 1437, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister (© Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden)
483. Jan van Eyck, *St Barbara*, 1437, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (© Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, photo: Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)
484. Master of Catherine of Cleves, *Hours of Catherine of Cleves*, c. 1440, New York, The Morgan Library, ms. M.917/945, fols. 1v–2r (© The Morgan Library & Museum)
485. Workshop of Jan van Eyck, miniature *The Birth of St John the Baptist* and *bas-de-page* with the scene of *The Baptism of Christ* and *God the Father* in incipit D, in the *Turin-Milan Hours*, c. 1435–1440, Turin, Museo Civico, ms. 47, fol. 93v (© Museo Civico Torino, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
486. Jean Pucelle, *Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux*, c. 1324–1328, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, inv. no. 54.1.2, fol. 16r – illumination with the miniature of the *Annunciation*, incipit with the portrait of Queen Jeanne d'Évreux, *bas-de-pages* with the scene of a *Woman Tempting the Young Friar*, and borders showing figures of musicians, a monkey and a hare (?) (© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, photo: Open Access, Public domain)
487. Master of James IV of Scotland, illumination with *St. Stephen* and the prayer to him from the *Rothschild Hours*, c. 1510, Christie's New York, Sale 2819, 29.01.2014; formerly Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 2844, fols. 218v–219r (© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, photo: Open Access)
488. Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian I, page from the *Hastings Hours*, 1483, London, British Library, Add. ms. 54782, fol. 49 (© The British Library, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)

489. Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, page from the *Houghton Hours (Emerson-White Hours)*, c. 1480, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University, Houghton Library, ms. Typ. 443/443.1, fol. 171 (photo: © Courtesy Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS Typ443–mets, <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.ois:hlviewerterms>)
490. Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, *Christ before Caiaphas*, page from the *Spinola Hours*, c. 1510–1520, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. Ludwig IX 18, fol. 120 (photo: Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program)
491. Master of the Dresden Prayerbook or Master of James IV of Scotland, *The Annunciation*, page from the *Spinola Hours*, c. 1510–1520, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, ms. Ludwig IX 18, fol. 92v (photo: Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program)
492. Simon Bening, illuminations from the *Mayer van den Bergh Breviary*, early 16th c., Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh, inv. no. 618, fols. 501v, 489v, 284v and 427v (© Musea Antwerpen, Museum Mayer van den Bergh, open access)
493. Master of Mansel, *History of Jason*, illumination from the codex of Jean Mansel, *La Fleur des histoires*, c. 1450–1455, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms 9231, fol. 109v, I 224 (© KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique)
494. Simon Marmion, *Scenes from the Life of Charles V*, illumination from the codex of Jean Mansel, *La Fleur des histoires*, second volume, c. 1455 or 1459–1463, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9232, fol. 423r, I 877 (© KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique)
495. Willem Vrelant, illumination from *Chroniques de Hainaut*, second volume, before 1468, Brussels, KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, ms. 9243 (© KBR / Bibliothèque royale de Belgique; photo: L. Campbell, J. Van der Stock et al., *Rogier van der Weyden ... Master of Passions*, 2009)
496. Master from Breslau/Wrocław, *Corona Beatissimae Virginis Mariae* from the Bernardine Convent in Breslau/Wrocław, 1490–1500, Warsaw, National Museum (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie)
497. Austrian Master (Workshop or circle of Conrad Laib?), *Diptych from Bischofshafen: St. Maximilian* on the panel of the closed diptych and the indulgence for the Maximilianszelle Monastery on the panels of the open diptych, mid-fifteenth century, Parish church of Sankt Maximilian in Bischofshofen

- an der Salzach, Upper Austria (photo: R. Slenczka, *Lehrhafte Bildtafeln in spätmittelalterlichen Kirchen*, 1998)
498. *Diptych and Prayer Book of Philip the Good*, c. 1430–1450, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1800 (© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien, photo: Open Access)
499. Netherlandish Master, *Diptych of the Holy Face and the Letter of Lentulus*, c. 1500, Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent (© Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht; photo: *Prayers and Portraits, Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, 2006)
500. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of the Arnolfini couple*, 1434, London, The National Gallery (© The National Gallery, London; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
501. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of a Man with the Green Chaperon* (so-called *Timotheus*), 1432, London, The National Gallery (© The National Gallery, London; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
502. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of a Man with the Green Chaperon* (so-called *Timotheus*) – detail showing the inscription on the parapet (© The National Gallery, London; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
503. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of Jan de Leeuw*, 1436, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie (© KHM-Museumsverband, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
504. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of the Artist's Wife, Margaret van Eyck*, 1439, Bruges, Groeningemuseum (photo: © Musea Brugge)
505. Master E.S., *The Annunciation*, c. 1450–1455, engraving, Vienna, Albertina (© Albertina; photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
506. Martin Schongauer, *The Annunciation*, engraving, c. 1470–1480, Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle (© Hamburger Kunsthalle, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
507. Master E.S., *The Baptism of Christ*, engraving, c. 1460–1465, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)
508. Painter from the Lower Rhine area (Master of the Diptych of Bonn), *Love Magic (Liebeszauber)*, c. 1470, Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Kunst (© Museum der bildenden Kunst Leipzig, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
509. Housebook Master, *Portrait of a Couple*, c. 1480–1485, Gotha, Herzogliches Museum (formerly in Schlossmuseum) (© Stiftung Schloss Friedenstein, Herzogliches Museum, Gotha; photo: Wikimedia Commons, Michael Sander, Public domain)

510. Jost Haller, *The Annunciation*, c. 1450, Basel, Kunstmuseum (©Kunstmuseum Basel, photo: Martin P. Bühler, CCO)
511. Master Georg (*Georgius pictor*), *The Annunciation*, panel of the triptych from St Michael's church in Wawel, 1517, Cracow, National Museum, Czartoryski Collection (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie)
512. Jan van Eyck, *The Madonna of the Chancellor Nicolas Rolin*, c. 1435, Paris, Musée du Louvre (© RMN-GP, photo: Réunion des Musées nationaux et du Grand Palais, RMN-GP, RGMP, L'Agence Photo, photo.rmn.fr)
513. Master of the Tucher Altarpiece, *The Circumcision*, c. 1440–1450, Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum (© Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum Aachen)
514. Southern German Master, *Ecce homo*, early 16th c., Warsaw, National Museum (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie)
515. Northern German Master, active in Danzig/Gdańsk, *Ten Commandments Panel* in the Our Lady Church in Danzig/Gdańsk, c. 1480–1490, Warsaw, National Museum, on long-term loan to *the Our Lady Church in Gdańsk* (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie)
516. *Ten Commandments Panel* in its original location in the Our Lady Church in Danzig/Gdańsk (Public domain)
517. Workshop of the Master of Langendorf/Wielowieś, *Triptych of St. Hedwig from the church of the Holy Spirit (?) in Breslau/Wrocław*, c. 1440, Warsaw, National Museum – surviving wings (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie)
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519. Swabian Master, *Triptych of the Holy Blood* from Weingarten Abbey, 1489, Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum (© Landesmuseum Württemberg; photo: Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)
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521. Master of the Altarpiece from Schottenstift, *Altarpiece from Schottenstift*, 1469, Vienna, Museum im Schottenstift – closed (© Museum im Schottenstift Wien, photo: A. Saliger, *Der Wiener Schottenmeister*, Prestel, 2005)
522. Master of the Altarpiece from Schottenstift, *Altarpiece from Schottenstift*, 1469, Vienna, Museum im Schottenstift – open

- (© Museum im Schottenstift Wien, photo: A. Saliger, *Der Wiener Schottenmeister*, Prestel, 2005)
523. Absolon Stumme, *Altarpiece of Hamburg Cathedral*, 1499, Warsaw, National Museum – view with the internal wings closed (photo: © Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie)
524. *Triptych of the Apostles* from the chapel of St. Margaret in the castle in Nuremberg c. 1465, central panel in Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek; side panels in Nuremberg, Burgkapelle (photo: R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, Imhof, 2009)
525. Master from Cologne, *Crucifixion of the Wasservass Family*, c. 1430, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (©Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln)
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527. Veit Stoss, *St. Mary's Altarpiece*, 1477–1489, Cracow, Our Lady Church – closed altarpiece (photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
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536. Plan of the church of St. Sebald in Nuremberg, with the direction of the procession route indicated (photo: author)
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538. Wolfgang Katzheimer and Monogrammist L.Cz., *Tucher Altarpiece – Road to Calvary and the Crucifixion*, 1485, Nuremberg, Church of St. Sebald (photo: R. Suckale, *Die Erneuerung der Malkunst vor Dürer*, Imhof, 2009)
539. Master from Westphalia or from Lower Saxony, panels of the altarpiece from the church of Sankt Aegidius in Hannoversch Münden, c. 1400, Hannover, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum (© Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo: Artothek)
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544. Parisian Workshop, *The Soissons Diptych*, c. 1280–1300, London, The Victoria & Albert Museum (211–1865) (©Victoria & Albert Museum, London)
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546. Calendar on folded sheets, with the full cycle of the months and signs of Zodiac and an indication of the average number of hours of daylight in a given month, c. 1400, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Lib. Pic. A 72 (©Staatsbibliothek Berlin)
547. Giovanni de' Dondi, *Astrarium*, manuscript of the *Tractatus astrarii* with the description of the planetarium clock's

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548. Hans Schüchlin (?) for the Workshop of Jörg Syrlin the Elder, the design drawing (Visierung) of the ratable of the main altar from the city church in Ulm, 1473, Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum (photo: © Landesmuseum Württemberg)
549. Jean Fouquet, *Étienne Chevalier Adoring the Virgin and Child*, two illuminations from the *Hours of Étienne Chevalier*, after 1452 – c. 1460, Chantilly, Musée Condé, ms. 71, fol. 201–202 (© Musée Condé, Chantilly, photo: BE&W Photo Agency, Warsaw)
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